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SWAMI RAMDAS
AND
MOTHER KRISHNABAI

A Devotee's Diary

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Shri Shri Ma Anandamayee Ashram
BANARAS

Volume IV

1957

ANANDASHRAM
P. O. Anandashram, Via Kanhangad
S. INDIA

Presented to Ma Anandamayee
Ashram Pustakalaya
Varanasi
April '72

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CONTENTS

Page

Chapter I STORY OF PURANDHARADAS .. 315

Ammani's grief — Recollection of her last visit — C. Ramachandra Rao's prayer and Papa's assurance — C. Ramachandra Rao's dream — Laugh and be merry — Man a conceited animal — Bhagavatar's experience in Tellicherry — Very few really benefit by saint's contact: Why? — Saints' contact does not go in vain: Story of Purandharadas.

Chapter II NON-VIOLENCE OF GANDHIJI AND SRI RAMAKRISHNA 331

Beginning of Nama Likhita Japa Yajna — Non-violence of Gandhiji and Sri Ramakrishna — Papa's love and concern for Ramkishore — P. S. G. Rao's enthusiasm in collecting relics of saints — Mataji's observations on surrender — Mataji's spontaneous criticism — Saree given as Prasad.

Chapter III MATAJI'S BIRTHDAY 349

Spiritual practices to be taken up early in life — Papa's reminiscences: An old man in Srinagar; A devotee in Jhansi — Tussle over 'your Bhakta' — Why Ramdas is after nice food! — Mataji's birthday — Govinda's furious attitude to the cartman — How the cows are affected by our mere thoughts — How R. Rao's Vairagya ended — Devi and F. taken to task — Worldly attachment and spiritual attachment — Vaishnavite Sadhu outwitted and humbled — A joke exploded.

Chapter IV MATAJI'S BOLD STEP 372

Natverlal G. Parikh and his wife visit the Ashram after their foreign tour; their talks with Papa and Mataji — Papa's thought-reading — Mataji's novel idea to water plants — Papa's role as Secretary in the Ashram! — A test of faith and devotion — Mataji on the trickery of the mind and how to tackle it — Different levels of consciousness — Execution of another Will in regard to the Ashram properties;

Page

unavoidable delay in its registration — God's will alone works — Papa's surprise at His play — Mataji's outlook on breaking of laws and resorting to falsehood — Her bold step.

Chapter V IS GOD CRUEL ? 386

The novel 'Coo-Coo' clock — Devi's strange behaviour; Mataji's remonstrance — The secret of Satsang — 'What happened in the morning?': Mataji's disillusionment — Papa's tummy — Papa's remarks on a Frenchman's impressions about him — Papa's and Mataji's photos to serve as scarecrows! — The evils of smoking Ganja; how it compares with the use of liquor — Be detached; you are a pure witness — How service of the suffering and of saints purifies — Effect of strict diet and regular walks on Papa's health — Talks with Ram on Papa's diabetes — Is God cruel?

Chapter VI STARTING ON TOUR: A TOUCHING SIGHT 403

Cinema show at the Ashram; Papa acts as operator — Talks about Papa's ensuing tour — Secret of Papa's story-telling — Busy preparations on the eve of the tour — Starting on tour; a touching sight — Scene at the railway station — Talks with three railway employees in the train — Loving reception by devotees at Cannanore, Calicut and other places enroute to Bangalore.

GLOSSARY 419

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CHAPTER I

STORY OF PURANDHARADAS

Place: Anandashram.

Sunday, 27th September, 1953.

Ammani and her grandchildren arrived at the Ashram at about 3-45 p.m. Ammani entered the Ashram with uncontrollable sorrow, profuse tears pouring from her eyes. She prostrated before Papa and sat in front of him. Then she tried to speak a few words which could hardly come out from her choked throat. She made her grandchildren also prostrate. They appeared cheerful. Papa also could not speak a word to her. After a few minutes' silence, during which Ammani was weeping bitterly, Papa said: "You must control yourself. Go and see Mataji." Then she got up and, followed by the children, went to see Mataji.

Now Papa and S. were alone in the Ashram.

Papa: "Ammani was terribly weeping. It is well she came here for a stay."

S: "Last time also when she came here she was weeping, was she not?"

Papa: "She was not weeping. It was long after her husband's death. But she was very anxious about her son's welfare, as he was in England at that time. It was during the war, and Germans were bombing England constantly. Everyday, we were getting reports of bombing and consequent destruction in many places. Every time she heard a report about bombing, she used to feel so much agitated that during the whole period of her stay here she was very anxious."

S: "A report of bombing there would mean to her something like bombing her heart."

Papa: "Yes. Why talk about her only? Because of Ammani, whenever Ramdas heard or read reports of bombing in England, he used to feel very anxious himself, though he was assuring Ammani that there was no need to fear and everything would be all right.

"She repeated Ramnam constantly, and went round the Aswattha tree every morning. She went on like that for months together. At last when her son came back she ran up to her home and brought him here. She took him to task for not coming to the Ashram straight, instead of going home. She then presented a silver plate to Ramdas."

5 p.m. Papa was seen going towards Ramachandra Rao's room. R. Rao was sitting on his cot with the book "Ramakrishna the Great Master" before him. When Papa entered, he got up and prostrated, and sat again on the cot. Papa took his seat on the chair.

Papa: "Have you finished reading this book?"

Ramachandra Rao: "Yes, Papa, just finished."

Papa: "You are a voracious reader, no doubt."

Ramachandra Rao: "I have everything except one thing."

Papa: "What is that?"

Ramachandra Rao: "In the last chapter here it is said that an ardent devotee of Sri Ramakrishna, named Vaikunthanath, was praying for Ramakrishna's grace always. But Ramakrishna was every time evading. And finally he could not wait any longer. He fell at Ramakrishna's feet, weeping, and poured out his heart and craved for his grace. Ramakrishna touched his head and asked him to get up. When Vaikunthanath got up, his vision had changed. He saw Ramakrishna everywhere. What a blissful Darshan it was!"

Ramachandra Rao then got up from the cot and put his head on Papa's feet, saying, "Now it is your duty to pour grace on me and change my vision." He remained in that position for about two minutes. Papa was silent. Then Ramachandra Rao got up and sat on the cot gazing at Papa with his eyes red and tears flowing. Papa also kept on gazing at him.

Ramachandra Rao: "You should not ignore us long. It is horrible — these worldly cares and worries. What more can I do? You know all that I want. I don't even have to ask. What is that you don't know? You know what is in my heart."

Papa: "Ramdas knows and knows not."

Ramachandra Rao: "I know Papa knows. Why should Papa say that he knows not? When Papa says he knows, why should I worry?"

Papa: "Why should you have to worry?"

Ramachandra Rao: "We worry because you have not yet given us. It is all right for you. You are above worries. But we are caught in them."

Papa: "Do you think that Ramdas has no worries? He too has worries. Does he not worry about you all? If Ramdas does not worry about you all, will you all come here? If he were to remain unaffected by anything, like a stone, how many will come to him? He worries about your welfare and progress; he is unhappy when you are unhappy. In another aspect, of course, he remains unaffected and changeless."

Ramachandra Rao: "But your worries do not make any impression on you. They disappear like a line drawn on water. But ours are not like that. We are bound."

Papa: "The difference between Ramdas' worry and another man's worry is that when Ramdas worries, he is still conscious that he has another aspect that does not worry or change. All men are not conscious of it."

Ramachandra Rao: "Why don't you make us conscious of that?"

Papa: "Why should you think that Ramdas is not doing it? What else is he doing? He is busy only in making you all progress on the path."

Ramachandra Rao: "But, Papa, I don't know if I will get another opportunity. In this life I have you. If I have to take another life I don't know what will happen. So I must make the best use of my life."

Papa: "How do you think you can escape from Ramdas? Even if you were to hide yourself, he will come and pull you out. Ramdas can escape from you, but you cannot escape from Ramdas. So do not think that Ramdas is not worrying about you all."

At this assurance Ramachandra Rao got up and again put his head on Papa's feet. Papa patted on his back and after a few seconds Ramachandra Rao got up.

Ramachandra Rao: "Papa, do not keep us long in all these worries. Oh, I had a bad dream last night. It was terrible."

Papa: "Why do you attach any importance to dreams, whether they are good or bad? You have to go beyond the dream, sleep and waking states."

Ramachandra Rao: "I found myself in a temple, I saw the deity there, decorated, and I was shouting to the Poojaris there to show me the way out."

Papa: "You saw a temple! That is not a bad dream."

Ramachandra Rao: "But the scenes outside the temple were horrible, dirty and what not. I could not place my foot anywhere and I wanted to get away. But any number of times I asked the Poojaris, they never listened to me."

Papa: "Why were you in a hurry to get out of the temple?"

Ramachandra Rao: "The scenes outside were too much for me to stand there."

Papa: "That was all to make you see God in good and bad things alike. You cannot abhor bad things, for God lives in them too. Ramdas remembers an incident in Ramakrishna's life. Once he saw somebody, absolutely naked, eating from the remains thrown out from houses in the street. Ramakrishna recognised in him a great saint. He called one of his disciples and asked him to go after the Sadhu and get whatever advice he may be gracious to give. The disciple went near him. Seeing the man coming near, the Sadhu asked him to get away, but he did not listen. Both walked a long distance. The Sadhu stood near a gutter and told Ramakrishna's disciple who was following him: 'When you see no difference between this ditch water and the Ganges water, then only you will have realised the Truth.' So, good and bad are only different aspects of Truth. That means Truth is beyond both."

Ramachandra Rao: "But the bad things I saw in the temple were horrible."

Papa: "If not in the temple, where could the bad things be!"

All laughed — Ramachandra Rao especially laughed so much that he was holding his chest with his hand.

Papa: "Any pain in your heart?"

Ramachandra Rao: "No, Papa. You make us laugh and laugh, and you quietly evade what we ask for."

Papa *(again laughing)*: "What is realisation then? It is not sitting with a long face. We must laugh and be merry. Ramdas believes only in that. So, keep yourself laughing. Ramdas must now be going to the kitchen side."

From the kitchen, Kunhambu brought a big round plate full of bananas that were presented by Ammani. It was shown to Papa, who said: "Ramdas has already seen this. Why should they bring it again? It has become a ceremony here to bring everything to show to Ramdas. You may take it. Has Mataji seen it?" Kunhambu replied "Yes", and left.

The paddy harvested from the S.K.V. compound has been thrashed and partly dried. Whatever is ready after winnowing has to be measured and stored in the granary. Mataji had requested Papa to go there at 5-30 p.m. So Papa directly went from Ramachandra Rao's room towards the kitchen side. Mataji was waiting there. She took Papa near the granary. One of the workers brought a small quantity of paddy and showed it to Papa. Mataji asked Papa to take a handful and put it in the granary first, before the paddy was stored. Papa did accordingly. The worker then requested Mataji also to do likewise. She did as Papa did, saying at the same time, "Why should I do so, when Papa has done it?" Papa then came out to the open and sat watching the paddy being measured and taken into the granary.

9-45 p.m. It is Papa's bed time. S. was massaging his back and Motiben his legs. A few others were also in the room. Papa appeared to be deeply thinking of something. He said with a sigh: "Ram's will be done! Ram's will be done!"

S: "What is the matter, Papa?"

Papa: "Man is after all a conceited animal."

S: "Animal?"

Papa: "Yes, a conceited animal. He is proud of his learning, wealth, beauty, name and fame, and position. And if he is a spiritual aspirant he is proud of being one. He always compares his own spiritual progress with that of others near him and feels himself taller, head and shoulders, than any other aspirant. So he ever goes on saying: 'I am learned, I am wealthy, I am wise, I have position, I have more spiritual progress than any other and so on'."

S: "So there is always something to follow this 'I'."

Papa: "Inevitable. After all, what is there for him to be proud of? You saw the Bhagavatar who came this afternoon. He praised Ramdas to the skies, saying 'Swamiji, you are a great Mahatma no doubt. What all things have you done within this short period of 22 years! An up-to-date Ashram with all facilities! Who else can do it!'

"Ramdas was surprised at what he was saying and replied: 'What do you mean? Ramdas is after all a particle of dust under His feet. What can he do? Whatever has been done was done by Ram. Ramdas is nothing. Do you think all these things can be done by human effort? Impossible. Ram alone did everything'."

S: "What did he reply?"

Papa: "He said, 'Hoo, Hoo,' and kept quiet."

A few minutes later, Papa continued: "He narrated to Ramdas a bit of his experience when he was at Tellicherry yesterday. He was the guest there of an 'Iyer' family. Last night, after their meal, the husband and wife, it seems, were talking. Wife: 'Why don't you offer *tamboola* to the Bhagavatar? He is an honourable guest in our house.' Husband: 'What are you thinking? He won't use *tamboola* or anything of the sort.' This morning, after meal, the Bhagavatar was to leave them. When he started, the wife from inside was asking her husband, it seems: 'You are sending the Bhagavatar without anything? Should you not give him some presents? It does not look nice to send him empty handed.' Husband: 'You don't know. People like him do not accept anything. They wander from place to place without possessions. I know them very well. If we offer them anything, they may consider it a disgrace. Do you understand now?' The Bhagavatar came away. He said only so much about the husband and wife, but never commented over them."

S: "The Bhagavatar was lucky to a great extent in that he was given food the previous night. The husband did not say that he knew such people would take food only once and that during the day, and would consider it a disgrace if offered food at night."

Papa: "So far he was fortunate. Of course, he would have resorted to hotels later on. Poor fellow, what else could he do?"

Then Papa laughed and laughed, so also all others, till Papa had his throat parched. Mataji came in and asked why all were laughing so much. Papa briefly repeated the experience of the Bhagavatar. She also joined in the laughter. "Now Ramdas must have another peppermint; his throat is all dry," said Papa. S. got up and gave him a peppermint to wet his throat.

Monday, 28th September, 1953.

9-45 p.m. Papa's bed time. Papa called Mataji and she came and stood by Papa's side.

Papa: "There is a letter from Mukund Pai. He wants to send his wife and children here for the Dassera holidays. It seems he is in great trouble. His financial condition is bad. He writes that there is no improvement even after he met Ramdas."

Mataji: "He writes about financial conditions. Is it so?"

Papa: "Then what else? Do you think all those who come here are for God-realisation? Don't be under that illusion anymore. They want more money, better business and so on and so forth. See the case of B. He is worrying day and night because his son has gone to the Himalayas on an expedition."

Mataji stood silent for a few seconds and went out to the hall.

S: "Papa, when people come to saints with certain desires. . . . ."

Papa (*interrupting*): "Their desires get strengthened!"

S. laughed with Papa, and completing his question, said: "They wish to have their desires fulfilled, and in course of time they get what they want. But in the presence of saints, don't they get a desire for the higher life?"

Papa: "Don't you see many people going to saints? How many are really benefited? Very few. The rest remain as they were. Some feel that they made a mistake in coming here, and so run away the next moment."

S: "Perhaps that was the case with the Australian young man who came here some months back. He found out he came to the wrong place and went away next morning."

Papa: "Yes, that is the type."

S: "So, does Papa say that most of the people who come here gain nothing spiritually?"

Papa: "Some of them abuse us and go. They sniff at us."

S: "If that is the case, when are they to turn to God?"

Papa: "They must get knocks and hits and then Satsang. Then alone the awakening comes."

Papa turned to Gopal and talked to him something about the Udyog Shala for a few minutes. Then again to S: "You see if saints' grace can transform all those who come in contact with them, thousands must have been transformed here. That is not what is seen. There seems to exist another condition to be fulfilled before the transformation takes place. Grace is impartial. But the power of receptivity is different in different people."

S: "Papa, is it correct to say that many are not benefited at all? Can they go away without any impression being formed in their minds?"

Papa: "We cannot say that they go without any impression. A moment may come, when they are in the world's sore trials. All hopes gone, they will remember their visit to the saint, and from that moment they will think of God. So a subtle impression which may take some shape later must be there. The contact does not go in vain.

"Purandharadas was a rich businessman but very miserly. God in the form of a Haridas went to him daily for six months begging for some help for the Upanayana of his son."

S: "God went to him like that daily for six months! Not an ordinary job!"

Papa: "God must have had a very hard time with him. Ramdas will tell you the whole story:—

> The rich merchant refused to give any help to Haridas, abused him and sent him away everyday. This continued for six months. At last he threw a bad coin to Haridas, who then went to the merchant's wife and narrated how he had been going to a merchant daily for six months and finally got a bad coin from him — a rascal. The wife knew whom he was referring to and did not like her husband to be called a rascal. She tried to send the Haridas away saying, 'What do you want? I can only give you some grains.'
>
> Haridas: "No. I want money."

Woman: "I have not got any money."

Haridas: "If you have a mind to give, you have enough to give. You have your nose-ornament with a diamond on it. That will quite serve my purpose."

She hesitated.

Haridas: "If you do not like to give, I shall go somewhere else."

Woman: "No, No. You are God Himself come here. How can I allow you to go away without giving anything?" She then removed the ornament and was about to give it to the Haridas.

Haridas: "What will your husband do when he hears about it?"

Woman: "What does it matter, I am prepared even to give my life to you."

Haridas: "Then say 'Krishnarpanam' and give."

Woman: "Krishnarpanam." (and gave the ring to the Haridas).

The Haridas then went straight to the merchant (her husband) under the pretext of selling it. Seeing the Haridas coming, the merchant, in a contemptuous tone, asked:

"Shameless fellow, have you come again?"

Haridas: "I have come here to do business, not to beg. Take this and give me its price."

The merchant took the ornament from Haridas.

On looking at it, he could recognise that it was his wife's nose-ornament.

Merchant: "From where did you get this jewel?"

Haridas: "A generous woman gave it to me as a present."

Merchant: "Yes, thief, is it true that you got it as a present?"

Haridas: "What, thief! Krishna also was a thief!"

Merchant: "If Krishna was a thief, must you also be one? Come here tomorrow, I shall deal with you then." The Haridas left, and the merchant in a fit of rage came straight to his house and knocked at the door. Hearing the knocks, his wife thought it was another devotee come to meet her.

Wife: "Is that Gopaladasayya?"

Merchant: "Ha, Gopaladasayya, I shall show you Gopaladasayya by a slap on your cheek. Open the door."

The door was opened.

Merchant: "What did you give to that beggar?"

Wife: "I gave him alms."

Merchant: "What alms?"

Wife: "I gave him some maize."

Merchant: "You gave him your nose-ornament with as big a diamond as a maize. Where is your nose-ornament, tell me?"

Wife: "I have kept it in the Pooja room."

Merchant: "Bring it here immediately."

Wife: "I shall do Tulsipooja and then go to the Pooja room to get it."

Merchant: "Now you have to go and take refuge in Tulṣi only."

She was now greatly agitated. She performed her usual Pooja to Tulsi and, with folded hands, prayed: "O Mother, save me from this situation. If you are not going to help me now, I must commit suicide." With her eyes closed, she was standing still. There was a sudden 'Tuk' noise. She opened her eyes. Lo! Her nose-ornament had dropped down from somewhere, near the Tulsi! ! ! She took it to her husband.

Merchant: "Ha, how could this come here? I had locked it in my box in the shop." He ran up to his shop and found it was not in the box where he had kept it.

Now came the great transformation. The Haridas, whom he hated and despised for six months daily, had gone away. The merchant was thirsting for a look at him. He started wailing: "Oh Haridas, I must see you again. Without having a look at you I cannot live for another minute. Come to me." Then comes a voice from Heaven: "Why do you want to see the Haridas' form? I shall come in my own form." Suddenly there was a flash of light and there stood Lord Krishna, giving Darshan to the miserly merchant. He no more remained a miser, no more a merchant. He distributed all his wealth to the devotees and, with his wife, left for Vijayanagar to serve in the temple of Vijaya Vithoba. There he came to be known as Purandharadas.

"Thus goes the story. See, the Brahmin Haridas, who was so much despised, ill-treated and so on, was prayed to by the merchant so intensely. Later the merchant could not live for a second without seeing the Haridas. So also, even people who scoff at saints realise their greatness one day or other and give their lives for them. So, you see, there are cases where people who came to scoff remained to pray."

CHAPTER II

NON-VIOLENCE OF GANDHIJI AND SRI RAMAKRISHNA

Place: Anandashram.
Thursday, 1st October, 1953.

Today is the beginning of Nama Likhita Japa Yajna in connection with the Silver Jubilee celebration of Mataji's renunciation. P. S. G. Rao of Madras, who is here now, has donated for a feast today. He was anxious that he should take meals along with Mataji. So when Mataji was ready, she sent word to all those who had not taken meals. Opposite to Mataji sat P. S. G. Rao, S. and others.

P. S. G. Rao *(to S.)*: "Did you see how many pamphlets were there in the packet that we brought? I mean the pamphlets announcing the Likhita Japa Yajna."

S: "No, I did not see the packet at all."

Mataji: "How many have enrolled themselves for the Likhita Japa Yajna, and how many are required?"

S: "Reckoning at the rate of 200 Mantras per day, per devotee, we need altogether 1,769 members, to be exact. But to be on the safe side, it is necessary to have 2,000 members. We require 700 families, taking three persons per family on the average."

P. S. G. Rao: "O, so many! We must get them soon."

Mataji: "Enlisting them is easy, but they must keep up the enthusiasm and carry on till the end in order to reach the target."

P. S. G. Rao: "If you shower your grace on them, they will all be able surely to complete the Yajna successfully."

Mataji: "They must have the determination to do it. In their worldly activities, in order to get things done they themselves make firm resolutions and stick to them till they succeed. For making money and managing business enterprises, they are very active, firm and strong-willed. But in spiritual matters alone they say, 'If you make us do by your grace, we will do so.' This is how they escape. If you all really feel that saints should make you do your Sadhana, then it should be equally applicable to your worldly activities also. There you are not prepared to throw the responsibility on them, and you are able to put forth your own effort. So, why not in regard to Sadhana also?"

Owing to the conversation, Mataji could not yet finish her meal, while others had finished. They were all, however, still sitting, waiting for her to finish.

Mataji *(addressing P. S. G. Rao)*: "Because of you, we all had a feast today; otherwise, we would have had our usual simple meal."

S: "He wanted to arrange for a big feeding of the poor. When you said that it would be difficult to make arrangements for that and the crowd would be unmanageable, he dropped the idea and we alone had the feast."

Mataji: "Why? This is also poor-feeding. Is it not? Are we not all poor? Among the so-called poor, many possess money. It will be hard to find even a small number who do not have any money at all. But look at me. I do not own anything. I am the poorest of the poor. So you must feed me first. Am I not correct?"

P. S. G. Rao: "We first take from you, and then we give."

Mataji: "If anybody gives me anything, of course I distribute it among all. I cannot keep anything for myself."

* * * *

S. had given this morning some manuscripts to Papa for approval before they were got ready for the press. S. went to Papa's room at 4 p.m. Papa was busy showing the photo albums to Ammani who has come from Salem. Mataji also was in Papa's room. The manuscripts given to Papa in the morning were lying on the table.

S. *(to Mataji)*: "Did Papa read out anything from these manuscripts to you?"

Mataji: "Yes. Papa read out three articles and one epistle. I feel that you should cut out from that the portion relating to Ahimsa. Papa is making some references to Gandhiji there. It is better such controversial points are not published now. You may publish them some years hence."

S: "Is it not enough if mention of Gandhiji is not made in the article? May not the rest of the matter go as it is?"

Mataji: "It is better that the whole para is removed. What Papa has said there about non-violence is indeed right, but how many can understand it? It will be helpful only to a few Sadhakas. How many real and earnest Sadhakas are there? Not even one in a thousand. To help one in a thousand, we should not disturb the minds of the remaining readers. What we publish should be easily understandable, easily digestible, by all readers. We cannot feed alike a child of four years and a baby of two months with the same sort of food. We give milk to the baby and rice to the grown-up child. If we start giving rice to the baby also, the consequence will be disastrous.

"If you publish the matter even without making any reference to Gandhiji's name, it will be clear to the readers from the context that the remarks relate to Gandhiji's views. When his followers read them, there will be unnecessary discussions, heated arguments and misunderstandings over this issue. So it is better to leave this matter for publication on a later date. What is not good now may prove to be good in the future."

S: "If, by publishing it now, we shall be doing more disservice than service, it is better we refrain from doing so."

Mataji: "Yes. It is better we do not publish it now. Did you catch my point? *(laughing)*. I am always asking people, 'Did you understand?' I do so to make sure if they have really understood what I say. This has become a sort of habit with me now. I ask like that because I often find that people do not understand my words correctly. I talk to them and they listen and nod their heads, as if they understood everything. But when I ask them to explain and restate what I said, I find they are not able to do so. Thus I once thought A. understood me well when I was talking to her about my early life and experiences. One day, after talking to her for some time, I wanted to ascertain how far she had grasped my narrative, and I asked her some questions on certain points. Then I found she was not able to correctly answer any. That is why I am not quite confident when anybody wants to write anything about me or my talks. You must have read what has been written by others about my talks with them. Are they faithful records of my views?"

S: "Who has written?"

Mataji: "So many have attempted. But I do not encourage them."

9 p.m. Papa was coming from the Bhajan hall to his room followed by S. Now Papa had in his hand the manuscripts S. had given him for approval. Showing them to S., he observed: "Mataji does not wish that the portion relating to Ahimsa in this manuscript should be published now."

S: "Mataji told me also. On this point of Ahimsa, Papa, I was talking to Swami Atmananda a few minutes back. It seems he once asked Gandhiji why in his foreword to the 'Life of Sri Ramakrishna' he wrote that Ramakrishna was a votary of Ahimsa, when he knew that Ramakrishna used to eat fish and did not mind killing bugs. Then Gandhiji in his reply to Swami Atmananda told a story about Tolstoy. Tolstoy was an ardent advocate of non-violence and a vegetarian too. But he was taking eggs daily. One of his friends asked him if eating eggs did not amount to killing life. Tolstoy thought about it for a while and replied, "Yes, I ought to have stopped taking eggs. At least from now on, I shall stop it." It was the force of habit that made Tolstoy continue taking eggs even after becoming a votary of non-violence, and when he was reminded about the anomaly, he at once stopped the practice. Similarly, according to Gandhiji, the implication is that Ramakrishna too might have been eating fish only by force of mere habit. I asked Atmananda if he was satisfied with Gandhiji's reply. He said he was not. But, he added, he did not pursue the topic with Gandhiji any further. Atmananda also told me that Gandhiji himself was not quite free from the force of habit. Gandhiji himself once told Atmananda that though he was convinced that he should travel only by the 3rd class he was still going in the 2nd class by the mere force of habit."

Papa: "It was all right so far as Gandhiji was concerned. But the case of Sri Ramakrishna was quite different. Unlike Gandhiji and Tolstoy, Ramakrishna never felt sorry for what he did. Ramakrishna used to take fish and kill bugs with the full consciousness of what he did and not by force of mere habit. He even asked some of his disciples to kill bugs and mosquitos. His justification was that, if they were not killed, they would be disturbing their meditation. Ramakrishna knew that the essence of Ahimsa lay in the heart, that outwardly absolute Ahimsa was not possible and that, without committing a minimum of the so-called Himsa, living in this world was impossible for any one."

Continuing Papa said:—

"Gandhiji was always careful to observe that he was only experimenting with the great ideal. One thing is clear. This question of Himsa and Ahimsa — violence and non-violence — is not a matter merely of external actions. It is primarily a question of one's inner spirit and mental attitude. One can be a true votary of Ahimsa and yet strike or kill another, provided one does so without hatred, with a pure heart, full of love for the persons so dealt with. One must have the full consciousness that his actions are prompted by God's will and that he is only an instrument in the hands of the Divine. In fact, such a one, who has dedicated all his actions to God, is free from all sense of doership or agency. He knows that God alone is the doer and that the individual is only a medium for the execution of God's will. He is free from ill-will, hatred or selfish motives.

"Another person may be externally non-violent, avoid acts that cause injury to any one. But his mind may not be pure. Love may not have entered his heart. He may not be free from selfishness. Such a one, in spite of his outward non-violence, cannot be said to be a true votary of Ahimsa. His conduct may seem to be non-violent from outside, but will be inwardly impure, tainted by egoism, passions, prejudices and selfish motives. He may be doing silent harm to many, though outwardly he may not commit any violent acts.

"A true votary of Ahimsa has love and purity at heart. He is quite free from the ego-sense. His is a life entirely dedicated to the Divine. He is always aware that he is only an instrument for working out God's will. He has no self-interest to serve. He works only for the good of the world."

Papa concluded by observing: "There is no doubt that Gandhiji was a true votary of this type. His non-violence was rooted in love and purity. From the way he gave sanction for the mercy-killing of a suffering calf in his Ashram, it is also clear that he did not go merely by external actions and that his non-violence was a matter of the mind, of the underlying spirit behind external acts."

Friday, 2nd October, 1953.

9-30 a.m. Papa started on his usual rounds, from the Ashram. S. was following him. Though S. has been observing every day Papa's love for Ramkishore expressing itself in many extraordinary ways, today he was particularly struck by what he witnessed.

Yesterday evening itself, when Papa was returning from his evening walk, Ramkishore took Papa to the kitchen side and asked him to stand by the side of the road facing the old cowshed — now used as a lumber room. He then went inside, brought out 3 sheaves of paddy stalks, kept two stones on the ground and started thrashing the stalks. In a few minutes the grains were all separated. In the meantime Papa was watching the boy and giving him certain tips here and there to do the thrashing properly. (The paddy was cultivated by Ramkishore in a small plot which he had got prepared in front of his house. The sowing and harvesting were done partly by him and partly under his own supervision). Papa was standing there for more than half an hour. Generally he used to feel very tired by the time he returned from the evening walk, and somebody had to rub his legs after he sat on the chair, breathing heavily. But yesterday though the evening walk was much longer than usual, Papa *stood* there for over half an hour and never expressed that he was tired. S. felt that for anything else however important, Papa would not have cared to stand there at that time, as he did yesterday.

The collected paddy was then taken in a plate and kept in Papa's new room. Now coming to this morning's incident, Papa and S. together were in the garden. Ramkishore came there running and told Papa that he had to dry his paddy. He wanted to know where and how he should do it. Papa suggested something, to which Ramkishore did not agree. Again, another suggestion from Papa did not meet with Ramkishore's approval. Then Papa said: "That can be done here in the garden. Get a bamboo-mat and a wire-netting, spread the paddy on the bamboo-mat, and cover the same with the wire-netting so that birds cannot pick the grains away." Papa waited in the sun till Ramkishore got those things and then gave him the key to open the room and get the plate of paddy. When it was brought, Papa waited again to see that he did it all right. He did not do it correctly. Papa then directed him to do it in the proper way. Papa then asked him to collect the hay and spread it on the stone seats in the garden for drying.

It was worth noticing how Papa was talking to

Ramkishore and making him do things. Papa's love for this boy, expressing itself in manifold ways, cannot be ordinary love. Papa does not seem to be caring for anything else, when the boy is near him. When he is not near, Papa appears to be all the more anxious about him. If any one, who has not known and accepted Papa as a saint or Guru, witnesses Papa dealing with this boy, he is liable to consider it as nothing more than a deep-rooted attachment similar to that of an old man towards his grandson. Papa appears to be so much concerned with the boy. But those who have known Papa cannot take it as mere attachment. They cannot say what it is and what it is going to be.

Saturday, 3rd October, 1953.

8 a.m. Papa's room. Mataji was in the passage and Papa was in the room. P. S. G. Rao and his wife were coming to meet Papa after their breakfast.

P. S. G. Rao has been greatly interested in collecting various relics of great saints for his museum at home. He has gathered many things that were used by Ramana Maharshi, Swami Narayan, Ma Anandamayee, Papa and other saints. He wants to have some more things.

Rao *(foutain pen in his hand)*: "Mataji, I have come to loot Papa's pen and some more things."

He then entered inside, gave his pen to Papa and asked for Papa's pen. Papa took out his pen and gave it to Rao as Prasad.

Rao: "I want to take Papa's watch also. But I cannot give another watch to Papa. I have got only a wrist watch. Will Papa have it?"

Papa: "No. No. Ramdas does not wear a wrist watch."

Mataji: "You may ask Papa to have your watch with him for a few minutes and then take it as his Prasad."

Rao (*taking the watch from his hand and tying the same to Papa's hand*): "That won't do, Mataji, I want something that Papa has been using for some years."

Mataji: "You must now take your watch back from Papa."

Rao: "Everything that belongs to me is Papa's. I have surrendered myself to Papa."

Mataji: "That is all mere talk. If you have really surrendered to Papa, you won't feel like taking things and keeping them there at your place. That is not surrender. No need to take from here when everything you have is Papa's."

Rao: "No, Mataji. That is also his house. That is how we feel about it. When Papa is not physically there, let us keep some of his things at least."

Mataji then suggested to Papa that if Rao is so particular he may be given the watch that was kept on Papa's table. Papa took it and gave it to Rao and also took out the string from his watch and passed the same on to Rao.

Mataji left the room for the dining hall, followed by S., Swami Atmananda and Subbaram. While taking tiffin, Mataji, addressing S. who was sitting in front of her, referred to P. S. G. Rao's request for Prasad.

Mataji: "This talk of surrender is all mere talk. If there is real surrender, the sense of possession completely disappears. One may not be particular of keeping or storing things. Even if one keeps things and enjoys doing so, he will part with those things with the same joy as he had while keeping them. To talk of surrender is very easy.

"You must have seen H.'s letters to Papa; how he was pouring out his heart in them. In every letter, he wrote that he had surrendered his everything to Papa."

S: "H.'s letters are really inspiring to read."

Mataji: "And see what has happened to him. I do not say that he had not gained anything in those days. Without attaining something he could not have moved so closely with and opened his heart to Papa. But his lower nature became too strong for him. It is not a joke to control the lower nature and go beyond it.

"When such deep-rooted bad habits are there, if he comes and opens himself in front of Papa, and if Papa's mind is directed towards him, he is sure to be freed from the clutches of his lower nature. But he must frankly tell everything. Recently a young woman had come here. Her case was similar to mine. I came out of the house, as the danger of losing my chastity was imminent even inside the house. Why could I not come out and face openly the same danger? When I came and told Papa everything, I was saved. So also was this woman troubled at home. I told her to tell everything frankly to Papa. If Papa says, "That will not happen," that is enough to save her. She was hesitating. Why should she hesitate? When we consider Papa as our mother, why should we not tell him all secrets? She finally told Papa."

Finishing breakfast, Swami Atmananda and S. came to Papa's room, where P. S. G. Rao was sitting and talking to Papa. Addressing S., Rao said: "I have now completed the loot. See."

S: "Oh, you have managed to get the cane also! You are not an ordinary looter."

Rao: "I am an L.M.G. (Loot Master General)."

Swami Atmananda *(to Rao)*: "I am going to loot you before you go."

S: "He is going tomorrow morning."

Swami Atmananda: "I must look to it today itself."

Papa: "You are going to loot the looter. Now you must leave Ramdas so that he may reply to some letters."

Rao got up and, with folded arms, requested in a low tone, "Papa, you must burn me just as Bhagavan burnt you, as described by you last night."

Papa *(smiling)*: "For that, you must come to Ramdas like dry wood. Ramdas went to Bhagavan like a dry log, ready to catch fire."

Rao: "How to become, then, a dry wood? You must teach us the technique."

Papa: "Ramnam. That is the technique."

Rao: "Papa, I must get dehydrated. Sure."

Papa: "Take more and more Ramnam."

10 a.m. The portico of Dr. Ramaswami's house. Papa was seated on a chair. C. Ramachandra Rao, C. Lakshmi Narasimhiah and S. were with him.

Papa *(to C. R. Rao)*: "How is your health now?"

Ramachandra Rao: "You must know, Papa."

Papa *(to C. L. N.)*: "How is his health now? Is it not better?"

C. L. N: "Yes, it is much better."

Papa: "So, Lakshmi Narasimhiah certifies that your health is all right."

Ramachandra Rao: "His certificate is no good. I want your certificate. You are the person to admit us and discharge us."

Papa *(to C. L. N.)*: "He does not care for your certificate. Why is it?"

C. L. N: "He has no confidence in me."

Papa *(to Ramachandra Rao)*: "Are you and Ramdas different?"

Ramachandra Rao: "If that is the case, why should Papa have to ask if I am all right? Who is all right and who is not all right, if there is only one?"

Papa: "That is all right in the static Spirit. In the world-play or dynamic aspect of names and forms we have all things to do. He Himself is in many forms—in healthy forms and diseased forms."

R. Rao: "So, this is one of His diseased forms."

Papa (*after a few minutes*): "There are persons who, even when they know that what they talk is wrong, go on arguing to establish that they are right. They will hold forth all arguments in their favour to outwit the other person. Saintly souls are more or less of that type."

R. Rao: "So, you are one of that type." (*Papa had a hearty laugh*).

12-30 p.m. In the dining hall. Mataji was taking meals. In front of her was Swami Atmananda and others.

S: "Mother, what did you tell P. S. G. Rao this morning when he was talking about the watch?"

Mataji: "I told him that the surrender he was speaking about was a mere talk."

S: "Not that point. Before he said that he had surrendered himself to Papa, he was talking about something."

Mataji: "I do not remember. If you had asked me in the morning I would have told you, but now everything has gone underneath the tea. Was Rao disturbed on that account? Did he feel anything?"

S: "I did not talk to him about it."

Mataji: "I generally do not talk to all like that, even though I may have known them for years. But to some I give replies spontaneously even if I meet them only for the first time. You have all been here for many years but I do not talk to you like that. Even if I notice anything untoward, in many cases I do not like telling them anything. Even if I feel like correcting them, something prevents me from doing so. I feel as if there is some catch in the throat. Only with very few people I speak out frankly about what they ought to do. You know how I used to talk to Natverlal. Another is Dr. Ramaswamy. But with his sister and wife I do not talk like that. It is not always good to talk like that, because they might feel hurt and there is every chance of their ego-sense rising up and of their thinking why I should find fault with them alone. I always used to take Rame and Gopal to task. I used to deliver sermons to them almost every day. I realised later on that it was no use. But all the same I could not help advising them, and I did it spontaneously. When Subbarao, Moholkar and Goonda were here I used to correct Goonda often when I felt he ought to have acted differently in certain cases. But in the case of Moholkar and Subbarao, I was not feeling like that."

4-30 p.m. In front of Ashram. Papa was seated on the cement bench. P. S. G. Rao, his wife and some Ashramites were getting ready to go to the Hanuman Mandir.

S: "Is Papa not going out for a walk today?"

Papa: "Yes. We shall go out for a short walk."

Papa and S. together went out towards the school side and came back in fifteen minutes.

Papa's chair was brought outside so that he might sit comfortably in the open. The dak also was brought. Papa received and looked into the letters. Swami Atmananda came and sat by Papa's side on the mat spread there. "The Hindu" received with the post was lying on Papa's lap, yet unopened. Atmananda slowly pulled it, at the same time asking for Papa's permission.

Papa: "Do you still have a craving for it? Ramdas thought you are free from it. Last time when you came here, you had perhaps less desire to read papers. Now you have got your old craving back."

Swami Atmananda: "No craving, Papa. Just to see through the headings. That is all."

Papa: "Any way you are caught again in it."

In five minutes, Atmananda went through the paper and returned it to Papa, saying, "Papa, I have finished looking into it. That is all I wanted it for."

Papa: "Good, you have finished so soon. Now you can go and do your Japa."

P. S. G. Rao had gone to Mataji this morning and asked her for her used *saree* as Prasad, to be kept in his museum of relics. Mataji, it seems, told him that she had only two *sarees* and she could not spare any. She further asked him why he should worry about keeping such things. Rao was disappointed, but a minute later Mataji told him that she would give him a *saree* provided he purchased a new one for her. He readily agreed and asked Keshav Bhat to bring four *sarees*, so that Mataji may select one. Keshav Bhat accordingly brought four *sarees* from the bazaar. Rao took them to Mataji and requested her to select one for herself.

Mataji: "I am not going to select anything, whatever you give is all right."

Rao: "I asked you to select so that you may take whichever you like."

Mataji: "If you leave me to select, I may take all."

Rao *(with delight)*: "That is very good."

He took his purse and paid Keshav Bhat the value of all the four *sarees.*

Subbaram *(who was standing near)*: "Rao, whatever it be, she is not going to keep more than two with her."

Rao *(to Mataji)*: "Mataji, one thing I would like to request you; you should wear all the *sarees."*

Mataji: "I will give away the extra ones."

Rao: "You may give away after wearing at least once."

Mataji: "That is all right. That is what I do."

So Rao was satisfied with the bargain. Mataji may have already in view as to who should be given the extra three *sarees*. So both are happy, and those who receive the *sarees* from her tomorrow or on any future day will be happy also.

CHAPTER III

MATAJI'S BIRTHDAY

Place: Anandashram.

Saturday, 3rd October, 1953.

9-45 p.m. Papa's bed time. Mataji was massaging Papa's legs and S. his back. Subbaram and Ramachandra were fanning him. Shivashanker (the Rajasthan friend) was sitting a few feet away. Papa, on his own accord, started talking about Ramnam.

Papa: "Ramnam is so sweet; so sweet that even nectar is nothing before it. It is a glorious pill, sweeter than nectar itself. That is the easiest and best Sadhana. Still how many take to Ramnam? They take to all other Sadhanas like Hathayoga, Rajayoga, Jnanayoga, and so on. All these Yogas will not bring them the bliss and peace supreme that Ramnam can bring. They might bring forth Siddhis and bind the Sadhakas again to the world."

Shivashanker: "Nowadays there are a few disciples but a lot of Gurus. Everyone prefers to be a Guru but not a disciple."

Papa *(laughing)*: "Instead of repeating Ramnam oneself, one goes on asking others to repeat. That is easier."

Subbaram: "In the houses they say that one should take God's name always and other spiritual practices only after retirement from service. But some saints say that the mind will not stay on God if spiritual practice is started only after sixty years or so."

Papa: "Why do you ask this question? What is your age now?"

Subbaram: "Thirty-one."

Papa: "When did you start singing Bhajan?"

Subbaram: "About ten years back."

Papa: "Were you not singing before, and if so what songs?"

Subbaram: "Any song that appealed to me."

Papa: "So after allowing your mind to roam about like a wild bull, did you not find it difficult when you wanted to control it ten years back?"

Subbaram: "Yes. Very much."

Papa: "Then, what do you think of the person who had allowed his mind to wander for sixty years like an angry, wild bull? Can he easily catch the bull and tie it to a post?"

Subbaram: "No, Papa."

Papa: "How can he take God's name with thousand and one worries in his head? He has his children and grandchildren. If a child is sick, the old man carries it to the doctor or takes a bottle and goes and weeps before the doctor to cure the child. Another day there is something else for the old man to worry about. It goes on like that. Where is the time for him to think of God or repeat His holy, sweet name?

"When Ramdas was in Srinagar, an old man was coming to see him almost everyday from a distance of 14 miles. One day he was in tears when he came to Ramdas. Without uttering a word, he took Ramdas' feet and placed them on his chest. Ramdas, with great difficulty, managed to hold on leaning against the near wall and remain in that position. Ramdas, in wonder, asked the old man, 'Ramji, what is the matter?'

Old man: "Swamiji, my grandson is seriously ill. Please bless him so that he may recover from his illness."

"Ramdas consoled him saying, 'By Ram's will your grandson will be all right.' He had great faith in Ramdas and the result was that his grandson was all right in a couple of days. After another two or three days the old man again came to Ramdas with tears in his eyes and started complaining, 'Swamiji, my wife, who is very old, had a fall this morning and she has a fracture in her leg. Please, please bless her so that she may be all right soon.' Ramdas said, 'Don't fear, by Ram's will your wife will be all right.' Again his faith worked wonderfully and his wife recovered soon. Another four days passed, the old man came again.

Ramdas: "What is the matter? Who is ill now?"

Old man: "By your blessings, all are well, Swamiji. But my son is not able to pull on with the low salary he is getting here. There is a better chance for him in another place and if you will bless him he will surely get the new job. Swamiji, please bless him."

Ramdas: "Yes. By Ram's will, he may get the transfer on a better grade."

"On the third day the old man was there saying, "Swamiji, my son has got the order for transfer on promotion, by your blessings. But his wife has severe ear-ache. She is not able to accompany him to the new place. Please bless her so that she may become fit to go with her husband."

Ramdas: "By Ram's will she will be all right."

"The old man happily went away. Like this the whole life passes away. Not a minute's peace of mind. That is what happens to old men.

"In Jhansi there is a Ram. He says he will go on with his usual business of money-lending at a high rate of interest, involving him in the utterance of a lot of lies everyday. He wants Ramdas to be with him once in four or five months. He would then serve Ramdas with all love and devotion so that all his sins so far committed may be washed away. When Ramdas goes from there, again his business starts, the sins of which he will again wash away when he meets Ramdas next time. His argument is as he told Ramdas, 'I am a child playing in the mud and soiling my clothes. You are my mother and when I, the dirty child, come to you, it is your duty to wash me clean; and again I may go and play in the same mud, and again you will have to wash me.' That is his argument. What Sadhana can old men do then? If you ask them to repeat Ramnam, they say Ramnam does not come on their tongue. Then what comes on their tongue? Grandson's name!!! !"

Laughing and laughing, Papa got up and sat on the cot.

S: "Then the grandson must be given God's name."

Papa: "Even then, he may be calling that name but what will he be thinking of? Only the grandson, not God."

Papa got up from the cot, again laughing. Going near Shivashanker he asked, "What do you say? How do you like that Bhakti?"

Shivashanker: "What? Of the old man asking blessings for the grandson?"

All again laughed.

S: "Shivashanker is still in the heights of Kashmir, not yet come down to Jhansi."

Papa: "It is a cool place and Jhansi is hot. *(to Shivashanker)* We have come down from Srinagar long ago and are talking about a friend at Jhansi."

Shivashankar kept quiet, as he had apparently not heard what was being talked about the Jhansi devotee.

Sunday, 4th October, 1953.

9 p.m. S. was coming to the Bhajan hall. When he entered he saw Papa moving about in the hall and a few devotees were also there. Some were writing Ram-

nam. Mataji was in the room just to the south of the Bhajan hall and was arranging certain things in one of the corner wall-almirahs. Papa was talking from the hall to Mataji about Ramnam-writing and the total number written today.

Papa: "Gopal is not writing even 200 daily; his figure is 100, 108 or maximum 114."

S. *(intervening)*: "Papa, Gopal writes only less than two hundred. That too, for the Japa Yajna started in connection with Mataji's, *his Mataji's,* Silver Jubilee celebration."

Papa: "That is the wonder. Being her Bhakta, he writes only below 200."

Mataji heard this remark of Papa and said, "No. There is nobody who is my Bhakta."

Papa: "Gopal is your Bhakta, what doubt is there?"

Mataji: "No, no. . ."

Papa *(to S.)*: "If Ramdas says this in Gopal's presence, he gets puffed up and goes about like a bird fluttering its wings. If he has wings, of course he would be fluttering them."

A few minutes before going to sleep, Papa enquired of Mataji about Champakbhai, the son of Narottamdas Shah, who came from Bombay this evening.

Mataji: "Who? Your Bhakta?"

Papa: "You mean Champak? Why do you say he is Ramdas' Bhakta?"

Mataji: "You don't like it very much when told like that, do you? I also feel exactly like that when you say Gopal is my Bhakta."

Papa: "What do you mean? Gopal is your Bhakta. He has so much love and devotion for you."

Mataji: "If he has no love for others, what is the use of being a Bhakta?"

Papa: "He is your Bhakta, worshipping your Saguna Swarup. He has not yet gone beyond it to the Nirguna Swarup. You have to help him to go beyond."

Mataji: "No such thing. I do not want you to say, so and so is my Bhakta and so on. You have been teasing me with such jokes. I shall now go on telling you who your Bhaktas are, and let me see how you feel about it. I shall repay you in the same coin."

Papa: "Yes, you must do it. Ramdas is a bit naughty. If he has no ego-sense, he will not take amiss what you say; and if he has ego-sense, that will disappear by what you say."

Papa then got into the mosquito net and went to sleep. Others also retired to their respective places.

Tuesday, 6th October, 1953.

9-45 p.m. Papa's bed time. Parvatibai was fanning Papa from one side and Ramachandra from the other.

Ramachandra: "Some arrow-root powder has been brought from Kasaragod."

Papa: "That is good. How nice to have some cakes made of it! A little of butter added will make it so fine. Ah! Ramdas' mouth is watering at the very thought of it."

Motiben: "Then we shall have it prepared tomorrow itself."

Parvatibai: "Arrow-root is very good, nice and cooling."

Papa: "Is it? That is exactly what Ramdas wants. Don't forget to keep some butter too. *(after a little while)* What a desire to eat! How he craves to eat arrow-root cakes!"

Parvatibai: "If it is not for eating, why has Ram created all these things?"

Papa: "Ah, but He says we must conquer our senses, we should control our diet by avoiding or reducing that which we like most. How selfish is Ramdas! He does not say that arrow-root cakes should be prepared and given to all, but wants only for himself!"

Parvatibai: "If you eat, the whole world eats. See what happened when Krishna took the one piece of green leaf from Draupadi's pot. The whole party of Durvasa felt like having taken a hearty meal."

Papa: "When Ramdas asks Ram why Ramdas is after nice food, do you know what He says? He says, 'You had enough of fasting, when you were doing Sadhana. The person who was fasting is gone now, and I am there in his place. I do not want to fast. I must eat.' That is what He says. Ramdas wants to eat fine, fine things now. Nowadays He is reminding Ramdas about drumsticks. Ramdas has told Him that it is not available now and so He has to be patient for some time."

Motiben: "In the tree near Dr. Ramaswamy's house, drumsticks are available."

Parvatibai: "Even if they are not available, can't Ram make them available tomorrow if He wants?"

Papa: "So you expect to see two or three drumsticks ready on the tree tomorrow, do you? It is not difficult for Ram to get anything done. But He does not seem to do as we want. In the midst of so many things, is He going to produce drumsticks for tomorrow?"

Motiben: "When He is doing so many things, why can't He make the drumsticks also?"

Papa: "If He wants, He will do it. But not as we want. Ramdas has consoled Him and asked Him to keep quiet for some time. He won't be in a hurry. Now he has got the arrow-root cakes getting prepared tomorrow. He won't bother about drumsticks any more. When we are talking about Him, He is laughing."

Saying this, Papa also got up and laughed with others for a while.

Wednesday, 7th October, 1953. (Mahalaya Amavasya)

Today is Mataji's birthday. It was decided that there need be no special celebration on that account in the Ashram. But from early morning people started pouring in. Tiffin had to be prepared many times and so also rice. With the removal of the pandal in front of the dining hall, the dining space has been very much reduced. Consequently it took a longer time for service, besides the delay caused in preparing rice again and again. The last batch (while still a few workers remained) sat for meals at 6-30 p.m. This batch contained Mataji, M. R. Ramswami, Subbaram, S. and a few others. As Mataji was in the kitchen from the morning, she was having a bad headache. She noticed also that all the workers were tired. The service was not to her satisfaction, as one or two batches in the middle could not be served with the required quantity of rice. With these thoughts in her mind she said (addressing S. and others sitting opposite to her): "What is the use of these celebrations? Celebrations must give a certain amount of internal peace and joy to all those who take part in them. But what happens is entirely different. Those who cook get so much tired that they become anxious as to when the whole thing would end. Those who serve are equally tired. What about those who take food? If everything goes on well, in time and so on, they feel a bit happy. But if there is some delay, or if things prepared are not tasty and sufficient, they also become unhappy. Then who is happy by these celebrations? They lose even the peace and joy they get on ordinary days when we go on with simple food and the daily routine."

S: "But, is it not the nature of the mind to crave for some excitement in the way of celebrations when all have been quiet for some time?"

Mataji: "No, not at all, so far as I am concerned. Even in a dream I won't wish for any celebration, let alone the waking state."

Radhabai who was sitting by Mataji's side was very unhappy to see Mataji also going without food till 6-30 p.m. She now got an opportunity to tell Mataji about it.

Radhabai: "If you had taken your food earlier, everything would have gone on all right without any difficulty anywhere. But you purposely fasted as you wanted to know for yourself how others would feel when they are kept waiting for meals."

Mataji *(laughing)*: "No, no. Nothing like that."

Friday, 9th October, 1953.

7 p.m. In the dining hall. S. was taking his evening food. By his side were sitting the boys Ganesh, Kishore and Subramania. When they had half finished, Mataji came and joined them. Before doing so, she asked Ganesh, "May I sit by your side? You have no objection, have you?" The boy only smiled at her, and she took her seat. A little rice and vegetable were served to her.

S: "Mataji, this evening the cart could not be sent to the Station. Did Ahmed (the cartman) come and tell you?"

Mataji: "Yes, Ahmed came and said that one of the bullocks, Govinda (purchased last year), does not allow him to go near him. At the very sight of Ahmed, Govinda gets furious and attempts to butt against him."

S: "Why like that all on a sudden? Both the bullocks were quiet fellows all these days. Ahmed took me to the Goshala and showed me how Govinda behaves with him. When about five or six of us together went near Govinda, he appeared not to be concerned with any one but Ahmed. His eyes became red with fury and he was intently gazing at Ahmed. I was surprised and could not understand why he should show so much enmity towards Ahmed?"

Mataji: "Yesterday, Ahmed had given a wash to both the bullocks and had tied them near the well. I happened to pass that way and, seeing the bullocks, remembered that we have promised to give these two bullocks and the cart to Ahmed so that he can look after them and earn his livelihood. I then called Ahmed and advised him that he should take good care of these bullocks. He should not be harsh on them. If he should prosper in life, he must cultivate a kind and charitable nature and so on. When I was saying this, the bullocks, standing though at a distance, had their heads and ears up with eyes wide open and were looking at us without a wink. I was surprised to see how soon the bullocks understood what I told Ahmed and how disturbed they were at our very talk of sending them from the Ashram. Immediately after that, Govinda was trying to butt against Ahmed and did not seem to like the very look of him.

"This is the case not only with the bullocks. Whenever I go to the Goshala and, looking at the congested space there, entertain a thought of selling a few of the bulls, do you know how they react? It is after all a thought, but the very next moment I see them raise their heads and cast a very angry look at me as if to ask me if I alone have the right to live in the Ashram and not they.

"On the other hand, whenever I went there and felt that the grass supplied was insufficient, and that I ought to have arranged to get more grass as most of the cows appeared not fully fed, the cows would raise their heads and give me a very gracious look and shake their heads as if to invite me near them. Thus they are affected by our mere thoughts.

"We had given a cow to M.P. When M.P. turned against the Ashram, this cow refused to take even water at M.P.'s house. If she came to the Ashram she would drink all right.

"Cows are so loving. They are like children. If we start taking interest in them, we shall never be satisfied with what we do for them. I used to spend hours in the Goshala. Now, of course, I don't find time to do so."

9-45 p.m. Papa's bed time. Lying on his bed and turning towards S., Papa asked: "Do you know R. Rao, a lawyer?"

S: "I have heard of him. Is he the one who was hit by a cocoanut by Swami Nityananda?"

Papa: "Yes, that is the one. He was coming to the Ashram every year for some years. He last came here about two years back. It seems he was saying later that there was no more need for his coming here as he got what he wanted. He started teaching others and soon got a batch of disciples. He had stopped his practice as lawyer and was solely spending his time in reading the Bhagavad Gita and other scriptures to the many devotees who were gathering in his house. Do you know what happened? He afterwards left his place and went to his father-in-law's house, where his wife gave birth to a boy. This is the sort of Vairagya these people get. He no longer goes to his place."

Papa *(addressing Mataji)*: "Krishnabai, do you remember R. Rao who was coming here?"

There was no reply. She had gone into a short nap.

Papa: "She has slept. Let her sleep. The whole day she was busy in the fields, standing in the hot sun."

Then she woke up and asked Papa what he was talking about.

Papa: "You better sleep. You are tired."

Mataji: "No, Papa. What about R. Rao?"

Papa then narrated the story, and when he finished it, said: "Don't you think that there can be only one in a million who is a real aspirant? Others have one desire or other lurking in their minds."

Papa *(to S.)*: "What a conceit! These people imagine and go on telling others that they have attained what they wanted; and this is the result."

S: "What to do with this sort of people? Some one started making an image of Ganesh and, when finished, it turned out to be the image of a monkey."

Mataji: "That is exactly what is happening."

Saturday, 10th October, 1953.

12 noon. M. R. Ramaswami, Subbaram and S. were going to the dining hall. A few yards away from the kitchen they saw Mataji near the washing shed. Seeing them, she took her umbrella and started for the dining hall. Noticing that she had not finished her bath, S. asked: "Mataji, you have not yet finished your bath?"

Mataji: "Today I will have meals first and then bath."

S: "That is fine. But what is the matter today?"

Mataji: "Today those ladies who have come from Trichur are waiting to dine with me. If I go for my bath now, their meals will be further delayed. I shall go to the bathroom, wash my hands and feet and come soon."

Mataji and the batch of women devotees from Trichur sat in a line. Opposite to them sat M. R. Ramaswami, Subbaram, S., Gopal and others.

After all had nearly finished their meals, Mataji casually enquired about Devi, an old woman, and seeing her, said: "Oh, she has come. Today, for something or other I have been angry from the morning. Some days are like that."

S: "What happened today?"

Mataji: "It started with F. this morning. Then with Devi. She dries her clothes in the room where she is sleeping, and if the clothes of somebody else are put there, she gets upset and abuses them. This morning some ladies had dried their silk garments in Devi's room, as they should not be dried in the sun. Devi did not like this and got angry. She herself had dried there her cotton cloth, which could be very well dried in the sun. She washes her hands outside the bathroom, but if anybody else does so, she fights with them. This morning I got angry and told her that I would take her to Papa immediately and report her conduct. I talk much, but delay in taking any action."

S: "What was wrong with F.?"

Mataji: "He has not been attending to his work regularly nowadays. It is also reported that he is gambling in a tea-shop. When I asked him if he was gambling, he got annoyed, as he took my question to be a great insult. I too lost my temper and went on talking, rather, rebuking him without even listening to what he was saying. I do not remember what all I told him, but I tried to impress on him that if he is working here he should not be absent without any previous intimation. By such irregularity, work greatly suffers. New men who are put on the job cannot do the work so efficiently. But that does not mean he is indispensable. If he goes away, we can somehow manage; but playing such tricks is no good. So I warned him."

S: "Listening to your talks about the Ashram, we sit so long that the hands get dry."

Mataji: "You go on writing articles praising the Ashram. What is the use?"

M. R. Ramaswami *(laughing)*: "Still harping on the same tune! Are we not writing also about the darker side of Ashram life?"

S. *(laughing)*: "Mataji, you are coming round to the same point which is always the 'burden of the song'; on whatever topic you start, you must end on this note about the Ashram."

Mataji: "What is the use of my talking about it always? That was why, perhaps, the ancient Rishis and Munis who, in the beginning preached a lot, got fed up with their preaching and finally retired to the quiet mountains. However much you teach or preach, the world remains the same, because none wants to learn. Everybody wants to be a teacher, not a student. Even that boy (referring to Mohan, Keshav's son), who is but three years old, wants to teach others and does not want to learn. That is how children are nowadays."

S: "Why is the world like that? The mentality of people today is much different from what it was some years back."

Mataji: "Because it is a world after all. In the world people have *Prapancha Moha* or worldly attachment. It is *Moha* for a limited family circle. But here we have *Paramartha Moha* or spiritual attachment. The circle is wider. If in the world people have Moha for four persons, we have here Moha relating to four thousand, four million, or four crores of people. Still it is Moha."

According to Mataji, anything other than the absolute *Samata* of the transcendent vision is Moha. Continuing she said:— ✓

"Worldly Moha is of a lower type, but in our case it is Moha of a higher type. In order that we may have this Moha of ours broken and we may be freed inwardly and outwardly like Avadhutas, those very people whom we serve, and to whom we are attached, themselves help to break the cord. You see here how they are helping to break the cord (release us from Moha) and make us free like Avadhutas. They alone can enable us to break our attachment. Now get up. Your hands are dry."

4-30 p.m. Harvesting has started. Mataji was supervising the work almost the whole day. Papa also went there after about 4 o'clock and both were sitting in the verandah of the small hut at the southern end of the fields. S. went there with a film camera to take some pictures. Seeing S. with the camera, Papa thought of Ramkishore. He called the boy Kishore who was coming with S. and said, "Kishore, go to the Ashram, tell Ramkishore that film is being taken here, and ask him to come here soon."

After the films were taken, Papa, Subbaram, S. and the children returned to the Ashram, leaving Mataji there to supervise the work. Papa then went and stood for sometime looking at the harvested paddy that was being stacked.

A Sadhu came and sat in front of Papa. He was in white robes, a long shirt touching below his knees, and had a big white 'V' mark with a red line in the centre on his forehead. The white 'V' and the red line had their base almost on the middle of his nose, the other end crossing the forehead was touching the head. That mark signifies that he is a Vaishnavite.

Papa: "Maharaj, what is the matter?"

Sadhu: "Guruji, I am going now to catch the train to Mangalore."

He then prostrated before Papa, got up and stood quiet. Papa then left that place and came to take his seat on the chair put in front of the Bhajan hall. The Sadhu too followed him and stood by the side of the cement bench near Papa's chair. Papa thought of giving him two rupees, and sent for his small bag through Subbaram. When the bag was brought and Papa was about to take out the money, the Sadhu said: "Guruji, you must give me some monetary help, at least enough to purchase a ticket to . . . ."

Papa: "Maharaj, we have not got enough money to distribute to you all for your tickets and so on. Ramdas thought of giving you something with which you can surely purchase a ticket up to Mangalore. From there you can catch hold of some big people and get help from them."

Sadhu: "Guruji, I cannot get help from anywhere. All are misers."

Papa: "Is it so? You have no faith in God then. Sadhus must rely on God for help and move about cheerfully."

Papa then took the money and passed it on to the Sadhu.

The Sadhu found that it was only two rupees.

Sadhu: "Guruji, please give me sufficient for my ticket to Rameshwar."

Papa: "Ramdas can give you only so much. You may get more help from Mangalore or any other place."

The post was brought and Papa got busy in reading the many letters that had arrived. The Sadhu sat on the cement bench and went on talking something in Gujarati.

Papa *(to S)*: "This fellow is a great grumbler."

Sadhu: "Babubhai at Cannanore purchased a ticket for me to come here and told me that I would get all the help from here to go to Rameshwar."

Papa: "Ah, Babubhai would never have told you that. He knows the condition of the Ashram. You are telling a lie for the sake of money. What type of Sadhu are you? Telling lies for money? Is this Sadhuhood?"

Sadhu: "That Bhavnagarwala gave me information about the Ashram."

Papa: "See how he changes the topic now."

Sadhu: "A batch of Gujaratis at Cannanore. . . ."

Papa: "Do not go on telling this and that to cover your lie. Is it to tell lies that you have taken to this life? Sadhus must freely wander depending upon God. You got help from Cannanore to here and from here to Mangalore. You must cheerfully go and see that God is there to help you onwards. You seem to have no faith in Him and instead of remembering Him you think only of *money-god* always."

This was too severe an attack for the Sadhu. He placed the two rupees on the bench and said, "Guruji, I am not a Sadhu wandering for money. I am for God and I go about with the name of God. When you accuse me of having told a lie, I do not want to take even this money. You can have it back."

Papa (*stretching both his hands*): "Maharaj, Ramdas will gladly receive it from you. You are a great Sadhu, but Ramdas is only a Bhikshu. He does not mind begging from you. Maharaj, please give that back to Ramdas."

The Sadhu realised that he was losing the game and wanted to play a different part. He changed his grumbling attitude and, putting on a smiling face, said, "Guruji, what do you say? You are a great Mahatma. You have everything with you. You are the King of kings."

Papa: "Nothing like that. He is only a beggar."

The Sadhu feared he would lose even the two rupees. He quickly took the money, put his bags on his shoulder and was about to leave.

Papa: "Don't think of money. Take God's name always."

Sadhu: "I am a Gujarati Sadhu and I am always singing Bhajan."

Papa: "You are now singing only of money."

Sadhu: "With your grace, I will do Bhajan."

Papa: "Yes, that will do you good!"

He left.

In the evening at about 7 p.m. Mataji was coming out of the bathroom after finishing her bath. S. was passing by. She called him and said: "I wanted to tell you something, but I do not remember." She then thought for a while, and recollecting, said: "Yes, it is about the Ashram. You all laugh when I talk about the Ashram. I do not mean that the Ashram should not have been started. I mean only that it ought not have taken the present shape. What we wanted it to be was much different from what it has now become."

S: "Is it like the case of the one who started making the image of Ganesh?"

Mataji: "Ah! Yes, it is like that."

Saying this, Mataji advanced towards the Ashram, when S. told her: "You are going away? But you said you had to tell me something."

Mataji: "There is a saying in Konkani which means, 'If you find the dog, the stick is not seen. When the stick is there, the dog is gone.' So, when I feel like talking to you, you are not to be seen. When you are near me, I forget things."

S: "Why not talk now?"

Mataji: "Now I must go to the kitchen to arrange all the things that have come from the bazaar today."

S: "Then we shall wait for another opportunity."

10-30 p.m. Papa's room. Mataji was spreading her bed. Gopal had just lighted some Agarbattis and was about to leave the room.

Papa *(to Mataji)*: "What is the day tomorrow?"

Mataji: "Tomorrow is Sunday."

Papa: "Hoo ...... Ram's will be done!"

Mataji: "What is the matter, Papa? When I said, 'Tomorrow is Sunday,' you said, 'Ram's will be done'."

Papa: "Nothing."

Gopal, hearing this conversation, said, "Because, there will be no money orders coming by post, Sunday being a postal holiday."

This explosion of a joke from Gopal roused Papa so much that he roared with laughter, got up and sat to laugh for a while. Mataji too laughed loudly. Papa could not control his laughter for a minute. But Gopal didn't laugh, but quietly left the room and went away.

CHAPTER IV

MATAJI'S BOLD STEP

Place: Anandashram.
Sunday, 11th October, 1953.

3 p.m. A taxi brought Natverlal G. Parikh and his wife, Chandrakalaben, from Bombay. They had come by air to Mangalore and from there by train. They had not given any previous intimation about their coming. When they got down from the car, Papa happened to be standing outside the Ashram, facing the garden. When the taxi stopped, he turned to that side to see who the visitors were. Natverlal and his wife were climbing the steps, when Papa also walked towards them and greeted them. As the weather was warm, Papa had removed his shirt and had only a thin white cloth in its place.

Papa: "Oh, Ramdas is like a Jain Sadhu now."

He then took them to his room straight.

About 15 minutes later, Papa took the new guests to the dining hall to offer them tea. They took their seats and Papa also sat by their side. S. also entered the hall and greeted the guests, and after the formal conversation with them for a few minutes, he took his seat in front of them.

Papa: "Now S. will take tea and keep company with you. Ramdas must go to the W.C. After finishing tea, all of you may come to Ramdas' room and from there we shall go to the fields to meet Mataji."

Papa left the hall. A few minutes later all met together again in front of the Ashram. Papa was ready with his walking stick to go to the fields, and all started.

Natverlal and his wife are very highly devoted to Papa and Mother. Papa and Mother stay with them while in Bombay. Natverlal was ill for some time and had gone to Europe with his wife for a change and had returned only two months back. So he had a lot of news to tell Papa about his experiences in Europe.

Natverlal: "Papa, we remembered you all so much in Switzerland and all other places. We had a very comfortable tour all through. I wanted to contact some spiritual institutions. There was one in Geneva called Moral Rearmament Association (M.R.A.). I took it to be a purely spiritual organization, but later on knew that they were mixing up politics with religion. I attended some of their meetings. But one thing appealed to me. They were insisting on everybody leading a strictly moral life and maintaining absolute purity, honesty, unselfishness and love (four absolutes)."

Papa: "Did you meet any of our Ashram friends?"

Natverlal: "I had taken a few addresses which Bansidhar Bhai had with him."

S: "Did you meet Mr. Henry Hamblin?"

Natverlal: "I had an appointment to meet him, but due to illness I could not go. The first one I called on was Dr. H. P. Sastri in London. I telephoned to him and said that as I knew he was a devotee of Swami Ramdas I would like to meet him."

Papa: "What did you say? He a devotee of Ramdas! What? This is what you people do. If you had met Hamblin also you would have said the same thing. What will those people think? They may take it that Ramdas is going on telling that they all are Ramdas' devotees."

Natverlal: "H. P. Sastri replied: 'I am a devotee of God.' He invited us later to spend some time with him, which we did one evening."

From a distance Mataji was seen sitting in the fields on a small wooden stool.

Papa: "Mataji does not know yet that you have come. It is a surprise. Ramdas told her two or three days back that both of you might suddenly come here and take us by surprise."

Natverlal: "Even this morning we were not sure of coming here. We had not made reservations. We went to the airport to take a chance and luckily there were two seats vacant."

Papa: "Sitting here, Ramdas can feel the pulse of you all. He knew your thoughts and so your coming is not a surprise to him. Nowadays he is able to read others' thoughts easily. If there is anybody by his side entertaining some bad thoughts, Ramdas knows it immediately; but very often he does not speak out as the other person will deny it and will fight out to establish that he never had bad thoughts. So Ramdas feels it safer to keep quiet about it."

The party reached where Mataji was standing. Natverlal and his wife prostrated before Mataji, who enquired of their health and said, "Papa was saying that you might turn up suddenly. Have you taken tea?"

Natverlal: "Yes. Papa himself took us to the dining hall and gave us tea."

Mataji: "It is very good. Papa himself looked after you."

Papa: "Ramdas played her (Mataji's) part, that is all."

Mataji asked Papa to sit on the wooden stool on which she was sitting before; the others kept standing and talked on various matters. When it began to rain, Papa started to return. S. and Natverlal followed him. Chandrakalaben stayed with Mataji.

Monday, 12th October, 1953.

5 p.m. Papa was strolling in the garden. S. joined him.

Papa: "Today it is very cloudy. If it is bright tomorrow you must take some pictures of the garden. The flowers are coming up very nicely."

Natverlal also joined them.

S. *(to Natverlal):* "How did you manage to come out? Is your fever gone?"

Papa: "He came out in the afternoon itself. He is not quite well yet."

Natverlal: "Papa, this is a fine and well laid-out garden. Whose design was it?"

Papa: "Ramdas drew the design and Francis worked it out. He has done it exactly as Ramdas wanted."

Four big plants were planted new and there was a bamboo piece projecting from the ground near each of those plants.

S: "Papa, what are those bamboo pieces for?"

Papa: "That is Mataji's idea to water the plants. Water poured through these bamboos will directly go to their roots. Otherwise only the earth on the top will be wet. Look at Mataji's originality. She has a wonderful brain. See this new room."

Natverlal: "It looks very fine."

Papa: "It is all Mataji's plan. She is an expert in planning. But one thing, she cannot tolerate anybody interfering with her plan. She must be left to do things as she likes. Ramdas used to interfere, but realised that it would have been better if she had been left alone. So, he has now given her a free hand, and she does everything absolutely perfect."

Natverlal: "If Mataji hears this, what will she say?"

Papa: "Now she agrees. But she sometimes says that Ramdas is still interfering. Mostly he does not interfere. Even when we receive money, Ramdas simply hands the whole thing to her and works under her. If somebody has to be paid, she gives the money to Ramdas and he pays him like a secretary. That is a good job.

"When letters are received addressed to her, he replies to them and sends blessings on her behalf. So he is truly her secretary."

Natverlal: "Papa can play any part."

Papa: "Oh, yes. He can play the part of the dust of anybody's feet too."

Wednesday, 14th October, 1953.

1 p.m. S. and Natverlal Parikh went to the dining hall but found that Mataji had not yet gone there. So they waited outside for Mataji. When Mataji came it was nearly 1-30 p.m. She smiled at both, and funnily remarked:—

"If you wait like this for God, you will surely get Him, i.e., if you do Sadhana and eagerly wait for Him without thinking of anything else till He comes."

Natverlal: "So, should we not take food till we get God?"

Mataji: "That is not what I mean. You wait for God with all eagerness, with the firm determination that you want nothing till you attain Him."

All sat for meals. Natverlal was having a bad stomach-ache ever since he came from Bombay. So he has been on diet.

Mataji *(to Natverlal)*: "See. Now you have been forced to live on purely Sattwic diet. But for your stomach trouble you would not have lived on Sattwic diet."

S: "Mataji, Papa says that Natverlal has become so

Sattwic that all men, animals and birds have started loving him. They flock round him, with the result that he had no sleep for the last two or three nights. Wild cats gave him company for two nights and then some birds and bats kept him awake almost the whole of last night."

Mataji laughed.

Natverlal: "I feel all right now."

Mataji: "Now you are all right. But this trouble came to test your faith and devotion. You came here with the idea of staying for eight days. The stomach trouble has shaken you entirely. If you had wings you would have flown back to Bombay two days back."

Natverlal: "I thought of starting earlier, i.e., on Friday. In fact, that makes no difference in my office, because Saturday and Sunday are holidays."

Mataji: "Not your office but your h-o-u-s-e! ! ! !"

Natverlal: "No, Mataji, I am not anxious about the house. She (pointing to his wife, Chandrakalaben, sitting near Mataji) is anxious about all that."

Mataji: "Do not deny like that. The mind plays all sorts of tricks. Deeper within, it may be entertaining some anxious thoughts about your house. But on the surface you say that you are not anxious. This is dangerous. Now you are able to suppress it, but a day may come when the mind gets strong with such thoughts and throws you overboard. To avoid that, the best ✓ course is honestly to see if the mind has really any desire to be clinging on to house and family. If so, advise it nicely about the pros and cons of it, and it is sure to be freed from that desire. Suppressing or hiding is no good.

"Samarth Ramdas had a fine way of tackling the mind. He used to advise the mind as he would advise children, and place before it the serious consequences that might ensue if it chooses to follow a wrong path."

Thursday, 15th October, 1953.

9-15 p.m. Bhajan hall. In front of Papa were sitting a number of devotees. Papa talked to them on various subjects. Then all were silent for some minutes. No questions and no answers. Breaking the silence Papa started.

Papa: "There are different levels of consciousness. That is the reason saints have expressed about the Truth in many ways. Some say Truth is dual, and assert that every other statement about Truth is wrong. Some other saints say it is one and consider the play of duality is false. Both seem to be right from their own standpoints."

M. R. Ramaswami: "Which is the higher level?"

Papa: "There is no higher and lower there. Both are high. One who says that God is the one, nameless, formless Truth is also right. The other who says He is the manifold forms is also right. But when one says that he alone is right and all others are wrong, then he is not correct because he does not know that he is talking about only one aspect of the Truth."

S: "When Papa says that the Advaitin is right and so also the Dvaitin, from which plane or level is Papa viewing them?"

Papa: "That is no level at all. That is something where the duality and non-duality co-exist, where everything is and everything is not. Having attained this state one is not able to say or explain what he has experienced."

S: "Is it not then the highest level?"

Papa: "It is no level at all. You can say it is the highest. The best way to express this state is to be silent. No amount of words can express this state. It is a mystery. Madhvacharya and Ramanujacharya were preaching from different planes or levels and that is why they appear to differ in their views."

Saturday, 17th October, 1953.

A Will was made by Papa some years back and deposited at the District Registrar's office at Mangalore. Many changes have since taken place in the Ashram affairs, and some of those who were appointed as trustees have left for the other world. It was therefore thought necessary that Papa should execute another Will, cancelling the previous one. Arrangements in that connection, such as the valuation of the landed and other immovable properties as well as of the movable properties, publications, etc., were completed a few days back, and the necessary changes were also made in the body of the Will with regard to the S. K. Vidyalaya which was previously run by the Ashram but has now been handed over to the Harijan Welfare Department. A final draft of the Will is now ready. This morning M. R. Ramaswami read in the papers about the Estate Act passed by the Government of Madras recently. He doubted that the new Act might affect the Ashram properties and suggested to S. that it would be better to consult some lawyers before the Will is finally registered, so that any necessary changes may be made in the Will to avoid any complication that might arise on account of this Act. When M. R. Ramaswami was reading out to S. from the newspaper about the passing of the Act, Papa entered their room and enquired what the matter was.

M. R. Ramaswami briefly explained about the Act and the advisability of consulting a lawyer before registering the Will. Papa was anxious to have the Will registered before he started on tour on 1st November. He was trying to hurry up things as quickly as possible. But delay became unavoidable now. Papa agreed to M. R. Ramaswami's suggestion and asked him to make arrangements to get a lawyer from Hosdurg tomorrow itself.

Papa then left the place, followed by S., and went straight to his room.

S: "We cannot ask the lawyer to come tomorrow as Balaji (Ashram Manager) will not be here. He is leaving for Cannanore and will be back only after three or four days."

Papa: "Balaji must be there when the talk goes on. So, there is no use sending for the lawyer now. We thought of registering the Will before we started on the tour, but there are unavoidable delays springing forth and it is clear we cannot complete it before the 1st November. His will be done!

"Why should we make a Will at all? Why should we not let things go? We are trying to avoid any frictions and complications arising after our passing away. We hope that by making a Will things will go on smoothly. But even with all these, the so-called complications will always be there, and if there is nothing, those in management will make some complication and thereby bring about friction. So, Will or no Will, there is trouble. So let things go without a Will."

S: "Then God's *will* will work. Of course, even when a Will is made, it is also God's will. So in either case God's will alone works."

Papa: "Always it is God's will alone that works. In fact there are no two wills—like human will and divine will. Whatever happens is ordained by the Divine. A robber robs because the Divine wills it. A murderer murders because the Divine wills it. A man does something good because the Divine wills so. In all these cases, though we may immediately attribute it to individual or human will, the fact is that behind all these is the Divine."

S: "Viewing like this, is Papa surprised at anything that happens in the world?"

Papa: "Yes. Ramdas is really surprised at His play."

S: "What, Papa? I did not hear well."

Papa: "At His p-l-a-y. When He comes out with new, new things never seen or heard before, Ramdas is greatly surprised. Sometimes He does the most unimaginable things. How can one not be surprised then? He plays the part of a pious man. Suddenly He turns into a hypocrite and does such vile things while still in the garb of a pious man that people abhor him. He can play the part of a first-class hypocrite. Who will not be surprised at it?"

9-30 p.m. Natverlal and his wife are to go tomorrow. So they were with Papa, talking for a longer time tonight. After talking for some time in the Bhajan hall, Papa came to his room, where his bed was being spread. They too came in. When the bed was ready, Papa sat on it.

Natverlal: "Papa, how are we to tackle our motor car affair? Lawyers are advising us each in a different way. What does Papa advise us?"

Papa: "As our Ramaswami put it just now, law is an *ass*. Government is making people tell lies by bringing such laws into force that people cannot live without defying them. What can Ramdas advise you? He does not know the worldly ways with all its intrigues. ✓ Ramdas has been advising all to lead an honest and straightforward life. But how many take his advice? They say it is impossible to live in the world without resorting to falsehood and foul means."

Papa *(to S.)*: "Do we in the Ashram lead a really honest life? Are we straightforward in all our transactions? What do you think?"

S: "We may be breaking certain laws boldly, but do not resort to telling lies. If we ask Mataji, we can see that she looks at this subject from an entirely different angle.

"Once I asked her if, to save herself or to save others from some critical situations, she would tell a lie. She replied that she would not tell a lie to save herself from any situation, but in the case of helping others she was not sure what she would do. She might or might not tell a lie."

Papa: "Her view in such matters is entirely different from Ramdas'. Ramdas would never tell a lie under any circumstance, even for saving others from difficulties. Whatever Mataji does is only to help others and her heart is so pure that her acts are always for the benefit of others. Whatever she does, she does very boldly.

"During the days of strict rationing, rice was not sufficient for feeding as she wanted. The ration shop was in the same building as our dye-house opposite the Ashram. She used to go there once a week and ask the storekeeper to give her some rice or wheat accounting the same against the ration-card holders who were not drawing their rations. Ramdas would never have done such a thing. Her argument was that there were so many being fed in the Ashram and rice or wheat was badly needed, and there was no harm in getting those rations which were not required by the card-holders.

"One day, when she was about to return from the ration shop with a good quantity of rice and wheat, the rationing Inspector came there and questioned the storekeeper how he issued the rice and wheat to Mataji. The Inspector was not satisfied with the explanation that the clerk gave, and held on to the view that it was an offence. Then Mataji talked to him explaining the situation. She said: 'The storekeeper has given us some rice and wheat which were not purchased by some card-holders. This is for use in the Ashram, where a large number of people of all classes are being fed every day. In the Ashram we are not working for any selfish ends. Whatever we do is for the public good. You people here should volunteer to help the Ashram as much as possible. Instead of that you are trying to stop us taking some extra rice. Is this for me to eat? Come and find out who all are eating?"

This explanation satisfied the Inspector who now, with folded hands before Mataji, said: "You may take whatever surplus there is of rice or wheat here."

Natverlal: "So, instead of Mataji becoming the accused, the Inspector became the accused."

Papa: "Yes. Look at the beauty of it!"

Natverlal: "But, what about Sadhakas? I feel we should never tell a lie on any account."

Papa: "Yes. Sadhakas should never tell lies for their own sake."

S: "Is Papa making a provision for them to tell lies for the sake of others?"

Papa: "No. They must be absolutely honest. Ramdas does not think there can be spiritual progress for anyone who is given to telling lies."

CHAPTER V

IS GOD CRUEL?

Place: Anandashram.
Sunday, 18th October, 1953.

Natverlal and his wife left this morning at 8 o'clock. When they came, they brought a clock for Papa. It was purchased by them in Switzerland. The peculiarity of the clock is that whenever it has to strike every hour and half-hour, a small door opens above the dial, a tiny bird peeps out and makes a 'coo-coo' noise as many times as it should strike, and goes inside closing the door. The bird looks so natural and realistic that it has become a matter of great interest for all persons young and old alike. Every time the bird comes out and coo-coos, Papa watches it, seems to enjoy it as if he sees the clock for the first time. It has been here for over a week now, but still its novelty has not gone. The clock is hung on the wall in Papa's room.

Papa, S. and Iqbal Nath, who has come from Bangalore during his holidays, were in the room. It was nearing eleven o'clock. Mirabai (wife of T. Mukunda Rao), who was away for the past ten days, returned only this morning and had come to meet Papa. She came inside the room and prostrated before Papa.

Papa: "You have not seen this new clock. Have you?"

Mirabai: "No."

Papa: "In another five minutes you will see that small door opening itself and a little bird will come out and make a 'coo-coo' noise eleven times. It will be a great fun, watch it."

She waited to see the mysterious bird, and Papa also was waiting and gazing at the clock. It was eleven. The bird came out and, after coo-cooing eleven times, went inside closing the door.

Papa *(while it was coo-cooing)*: "Ah, look at that" *(and laughed)*.

Papa *(to S.)*: "This clock may not work satisfactorily for a long time."

S: "It may not. These are after all fancy things. See the watch given to Papa by Bhai Pratap. It looks nice and must have cost a lot, but does not work properly."

Papa: "Oh, Ramdas forgot to send that watch to Bhai Pratap through Natverlal. He could have got it repaired by the time we reached Bombay. Ramdas made a mistake. (Again after a few seconds). It cannot be a mistake. There must be some meaning in Ramdas' forgetting to send it through Natverlal. Even the minutest actions are controlled by the Supreme Power. Every so-called mistake or slip is done with a definite purpose behind it. Then how can we call it a mistake or a slip?"

S: "Why is it then that Papa sometimes says he made a mistake and so on?"

Papa *(after laughing a while)*: "These words are in the vocabulary. So Ramdas must use them as there are no other suitable words to explain things."

S: "So, Papa gives only so much value to these words."

Papa: "Through these expressions we must go deeper into the real meaning."

Mataji: "Papa, bath is ready. Come on."

It was already late. So Papa hurried up to the bathroom.

1 p.m. Dining hall. Mataji had sat down for meals. On her either side were children who had come from the Mangalore Sevashram to spend their Dassera holidays here, and also daughters of Mukund Pai. All these girls are very anxious to sit by Mataji's side as long as they are in the Ashram. Devi, an old woman, came for meals and found that on Mataji's right there was a girl sitting but there was a short space left between that girl and the wall. Devi wanted to occupy that space so that she could also sit near Mataji.

Knowing Devi's wish to squeeze in between that girl and wall, Mataji asked her to sit in another place as that place was not sufficient for her. But Devi insisted on occupying that very place. At this, Mataji wanted to give her a bit of her mind.

Mataji: "Devi, you may sit somewhere else. Why are you particular of sitting there? Oh, you want to sit near me. Is it not? You do not want to obey what I say. What do you gain then by sitting near me? You gain nothing but further strength for your anger. I do not want you to sit here. Go and sit somewhere else."

Devi quietly occupied a place away from Mataji and started her meal.

Mataji *(to S., M.R.R. and others):* "See this character. She wants to sit by my side, but never listens to a single word of mine. The hubbub she creates when anybody asks her for a garland is something to be ashamed of. She plucks flowers and Tulsi leaves and makes garlands daily. She is particular that she alone should garland Papa. Even if asked, she won't give a garland to anybody else. When anybody asks, she becomes so furious that she replies, 'Garland. Go, go. Pluck flowers and make a garland. I cannot give you.' Is this the mentality that they should develop by staying with me, taking Prasad and so on? The Prasad only increases their bad temper and selfishness."

S: "Unless they improve in your company and with your contact, where is the salvation for them? Do you mean to say Satsang has no value at all?"

Mataji: "But you must have the mind to improve. Otherwise, what is the use of our contact? You must be prepared to receive and we must be prepared to give. When we are prepared to give and you do not want it, what is the use? So one must have the ardent wish to improve. Then only one derives the benefit of Satsang. Devotees who come here only for short stays appear to be progressing better than those who stay with us always.

"I told you all this because I was upset from the morning itself."

S: "What happened in the morning?"

Mataji: "Generally when I give anything to others by way of help, I forget all about it later. Sometimes I do not even know how much money I paid them because I take whatever I have and give them without counting. Not that I always do like that, but mostly so. I never talk about my charities to anybody, as far as possible, if I am aware how much I have given. I was wondering at myself when I started narrating this morning in detail all that I paid to a person, say X. No, let me better tell you more clearly. You saw the woman with her daughter who went this morning with Natverlal's party in the same car. Her condition is pitiable because of her extreme poverty. She was better off. An aunt or some relation of hers is a very rich woman and whenever she comes to these people, she gives her old *sarees,* and some other help. So they are seen wearing costly *sarees.* Closely observed, one could see how old they are—full of holes. This woman has a number of children and she narrated to me all her affairs, and I did give her some money when she left. I was talking about this affair to Radha and others while cutting vegetables. Then Radha tells me that they do not seem to be poor; it is all a show outside to cheat me and take money from me; just like them, many people come and cheat me, and so on.

"From this I understood the mentality of the people around me. If that woman came to me under a false pretence of poverty, can I not say Radha also might be doing the same thing when she narrates about her difficulties? These people cannot tolerate my giving anything to others. Are they not themselves getting all benefits from here? So why should they grumble when some others get even a fraction of what they get? They themselves do not give. But why should they feel jealous when I give to others? Is this the progress they make by our contact? I thought one might progress well if he or she is with us from childhood itself. But after seeing how Ramkishore is behaving, that illusion is also gone."

Monday, 19th October, 1953.

1 p.m. While taking meals, Subbaram asked Mataji: "When I meet some people I feel spontaneous love for them, speak to them, and do all sorts of service for them. In the case of certain other people, I do not even like to speak to them. Why is it so?"

Mataji: "Let it be so. You may sometimes feel like speaking to some and not to others. Sometimes you may like doing something but some other time not. You think of eating something, but suddenly refrain from eating. So, do not give any importance to and put your mind on such petty things."

Tuesday, 20th October, 1953.

10-30 a.m. In Papa's room. S. was giving the usual massage to Papa. Iqbal Nath was fanning him.

Papa: "This old horse is tired. Ramdas is unwillingly submitting to the massaging."

S: "Does this not do good to Papa?"

Papa: "Don't know. Ramdas never thought about it. Today he will tell you how he feels after massage."

S. *(to Iqbal)*: "How is Papa's tummy? Is there any difference from what you saw last time when you were here?"

Iqbal: "Yes. It is slightly less."

S: "Ha, did Papa hear what he said? As we are seeing every day, we cannot make out if there is really any difference."

Iqbal: "Last time when I came here I was shocked to see Papa with a big tummy. I had seen him as a thin figure in 1938, when he came to our house in Srinagar."

S: "How did Papa get this tummy?"

Papa: "That is what Ramdas is trying to find out. Gurudev had a tummy. So, perhaps it is hereditary. For Ramdas it came only after his illness in 1938, mostly due to his sedentary habits."

9-30 p.m. Gopal had made Papa's bed ready. Papa was about to go to bed. Iqbal, Subbaram, and S. were with him. Papa sat on his cot and asked Iqbal: "How is that Frenchman, Jean Bergerot? Has he any interest in religion?" (Iqbal had known him from Bangalore).

Iqbal: "He has read a lot of books on Indian philosophy. I think he is spiritually minded too."

S: "Did he not talk to Papa at all?"

Papa: "He talked once immediately after his arrival, not after that."

Iqbal: "I asked him to tell me his impressions about Papa."

Papa: "M. R. Ramaswami also wanted the same thing, and has asked him to write it out for THE VISION."

Iqbal: "When I asked him, he said that he did not think Papa is a Jivanmukta. I was surprised, and asked him what made him think so. He said he found Papa easily disturbed when the children were making noise. He admits Papa is a holy person and so on, but not a Jivanmukta yet."

Papa: "Everybody forms his own opinion of Ramdas. They are quite at liberty to do so. Ramdas does ask the children to go away from here when they make noise. We cannot talk when they shout."

Iqbal: "But I would be very sorry if he goes back with this impression. When he got such a unique privilege to come here and be with Papa, it is indeed a very sad affair to return with such an impression. I told him that his judgment was wrong and that it is a pity these trifling things should create in him such an impression."

Papa: "What can we do? We can't force things on them when they do not want them. It seems somebody criticised Sri Ramkrishna saying that he was not a spiritually advanced person, but only an ordinary man. Ramakrishna then answered him that a God-realised man does not develop two horns on his head. You cannot find any outward mark for a Jivanmukta. And further, Ramdas does not pose to be a Jivanmukta. Is posing necessary? Perhaps those who pose are passed off as Jivanmuktas.

"When we are talking and the children make noise here, how can we allow them to have their own way?

If Ramdas does not ask them to keep quiet, the critic may ask why Ramdas is tolerating the boys' shouting.

"In Ramanashram, Maharshi remained unconcerned with all such things. Devotees asked why he was not even advising the children to keep quiet. So, either way the critic has something to say. After all, a Jivanmukta is not a mere statue."

Friday, 23rd October, 1953.

4-30 p.m. Papa, followed by Jean Bergerot, Balayogi, Subbaram and S. started for an evening walk. From outside the gate they could see Swami Krishnananda coming from the Udyog Shala. Swami Krishnananda came only a few days back from Guruvayur where he intends settling down for intense Sadhana. In a few minutes he also joined Papa and party.

S: "Swamiji, are they photos that you have in the packet in your hand?"

Swami Krishnananda: "I got Papa's and Mother's photos to take to Guruvayur." *(to Papa):* "With Papa's grace alone I can succeed in my five-year plan of Sadhana."

Papa: "Is it like the Soviet five-year plan?"

Swami Krishnananda: "This is a plan of intense Sadhana. I will keep these two photos there on a raised pedestal, Agarbattis will be burning, a few books also will be on the pedestal, and I will sit facing the photographs on an Asan."

Papa: "Why all these external paraphernalia?"

Swami Krishnananda: "Really I do not need these extenal aids for the type of Japa I do. I take my mind only within. But I am keeping these external things to keep people away from me. When they come and see me sitting in front of the pictures and all other things they will know that I am sitting for Pooja and therefore will quietly return; whereas if they see me sitting alone without these external things of worship, there is every likelihood of their dragging me into talks and so on."

Papa: "So you are going to keep Ramdas and Mataji there as 'scarecrows!" This created a roar of laughter in the party.

The small group then walked about a mile on the road towards the east. It was about Sadhus and the use of Ganja that Papa talked all the way. He said: "There are many Sadhus who are addicted to Ganja. When Ramdas was wandering with them, they used to force him also to smoke Ganja, and Ramdas did use it a few times. They say it helps meditation. But the greatest danger is that they find it impossible to live without it later."

S: "In what way does it help meditation?"

Papa: "It can make one forget all about the world."

S: "That does not mean the mind will stay on God. Even concentration will be impossible then."

Papa: "Though the mind will be away from worldly thoughts, it will not be fixed anywhere. It won't give a positive joy. It will be only the absense of worldly cares, a purely negative state."

Swami Krishnananda: "Then how can one say it helps meditation?"

Papa: "By forgetting the world one becomes free from those worries and the state of absense of worries is mistaken to be a high plane. But this Ganja, in course of time, ruins a man."

S: "What is the difference between the intoxication caused by liquor and that by Ganja?"

Papa: "That caused by liquor is something bestial, whereas that caused by Ganja does not give rise to low thoughts."

Now the party turned about and, as it was likely to rain, all walked fast and reached the Ashram soon. Papa sat on the Asan, and Swami Krishnananda and S. in front of him on the floor.

Papa: "Ramnam is the thing that you must keep up all the time without break. This is the best and simplest Sadhana. Can you remain in the world and be dead to it? Can you talk, act and move about and yet be dead to the world?"

Swami K: "What does Papa mean by 'being dead to the world'?"

Papa: "Absolutely detached, unconcerned. Whatever may happen in front of you, you are not affected. You do things like an automaton, because you are worked by the higher power."

Swami K: "Papa, we can remain detached everywhere, except when we see suffering."

Papa: "Which part of your being is affected by the suffering? It will be a part that belongs to the manifestation. Your true being is different from the manifestation and so how can your real being be affected? You are a pure witness."

Swami K: "When we give whatever possible help to relieve the suffering, then we feel happier."

Papa: "Again, watch which part of the being feels happier. You will find that it is only the manifested part. All the movements, all the feelings of sorrow and happiness, and the sufferings, and the relief from suffering all these belong to the plane of manifestation.

"Of course, when someone is suffering, we can help him. Our heart melts and we come down to the level of the sufferer and feel completely one with him. Sometimes we may weep with the sufferer, though not always outwardly, and when we feel one with him he is, to a great extent, relieved of the suffering. This purifies us too. This is the advantage of service. We feel one with the served. When we serve saints, we lose ourselves in the service, forget our ego-sense and feel one with them. This will take us up quickly. In both the sorts of service we attain to a high state of purity and our ego-sense gradually disappears—by humbling ourselves down while serving the distressed, and by raising ourselves to their level while serving saints.

"How can we sympathise with those who suffer? It is possible only when we have got a pure heart. How can we have a pure heart? Only when it becomes God's own heart. Ask those people who are going about there if they can feel for the sufferings of others. They weep when their own kith and kin suffer, but not others. Here the sense of my-ness is obstructing them. What an amount of mischief the ego-sense does! After all, it is only a *sense* and not anything that exists. Saints, who have once for all shed their ego-sense, wonder how anything that has no existence at all becomes the cause of so much misery to man. When we shed the ego-sense, how sweet everything is!"

Swami K: "What is the nature of that sweetness?"

Papa: "It is pure bliss — unadulterated bliss permeating each and every cell of our body. Later we realise that the same bliss is pervading everywhere. We swim in an ocean of bliss."

Saturday, 24th October, 1953.

Recently it was found that there was a higher percentage of sugar in Papa's urine. So he had been adjusting his diet very strictly since, and also taking regular evening walks. He finds it does good for his body and reduces the sugar in urine. This morning, when the urine was tested, the sugar was reported to be nearly normal. Mataji was happy to hear this.

Papa *(to Mataji)*: "Did you hear the urine-test result? And do you know what Ramdas ate yesterday? He took *dosai* (made of rice) and jaggery with it. Still the sugar in the urine is much less."

Mataji *(laughing)*: "It would be better to take *dosai* daily so that sugar may be less. The *dosais* were brought with so much love by Radha (Kogganna's wife), and her intense love has played the miracle. You ought to have seen Radha when she brought it for you. I met her on the way. As there was nothing to eat with my tea last evening and when I saw her carrying *dosai* for Papa, I told her that Papa might not take it but I wanted one or two from her. You see, she wouldn't give me. She said Papa should eat first and that he *would* eat. Then in a short time she brought me hot, hot *dosais*. Things given with such love will not cause any harm to the body."

In the forenoon Mataji told Papa that Radha would bring for him *iddali and khir*. Papa took them with the noon meal. The afternoon urine was again nearly clear.

Papa *(to S.)*: "Today the urine is very clear. Ramdas' evening walk is responsible for this."

S: "But Mataji attributes it to Radha's *dosai, iddali* and *khir* served to Papa with great love."

Papa: "Let Mataji and others think like that and go on giving Ramdas sweet and delicious preparations. In the meantime we must keep up our walk. If we give up walking, the whole fun is gone."

Sunday, 15th October, 1953.

10-15 a.m. Papa's room. Papa has finished his shave and is waiting for the usual massage before bath. S., after cleaning the razor, brush, etc., prepared Papa's bed for his massage. Swami Krishnananda was also in the room, fanning Papa.

S: "Papa, shall we start our massage business?"

Papa: "Yes, Ramdas is ready."

Now Swami K. was about to leave the room, but Papa asked him to stay on.

Papa *(to S.)*: "During massage last night Ramdas had a talk with Ram."

S: "About what, Papa?"

Papa: "About Ramdas' diabetes."

S: "What did He say?"

Papa: "He says, if Ramdas does not control his diet he will become another Ambakka."

Ambakka is an old mother in the Ashram suffering from serious diabetes and having a carbuncle on her back. The carbuncle does not heal. If one heals, another one crops up.

S: "That is horrible. One should not be like Ambakka. Is He not going to cure Papa's diabetes?"

Papa: "That is not Ramdas' concern. His will be done!"

S: "How long is He going to keep Papa under strict diet?"

Papa: "He says Ramdas has been eating sweets all these sixty-five years and he should not crave for them any longer."

S: "But, at least to satisfy the devotees who are anxious to feed Papa with various sweets, Ram should make Papa free from diabetes."

Papa: "Do you know what He says? If Ramdas is carried away by the so-called love of the devotees, he will have to suffer."

S: "Is it only so-called love?"

Papa: "Yes. There is no proper understanding behind it. That is all misplaced love. Ram says, 'They will make you eat anything and everything and hasten your body to depart. The devotees themselves are responsible for your diabetes.' So, Ramdas has to be careful and adjust his diet. His evening walks also will help. He should not be lazy to take the walk. If Ram wills that this body should last long, He will make Ramdas give up his laziness for the evening walk."

9-30 p.m. Papa is lying down. Mataji is sitting on one side and S. on the other for massaging him.

Papa *(to S.)*: "We call Him all-compassionate, all-merciful and so on. What is the meaning of all these? He sometimes keeps His devotees weeping and wailing all their life unto death. He does not come to them. Is it mercy? Ramdas has seen cases where some devotees had been burning with intense longing for Him all their life. But He did not come. What do you say about this? What is the solution?"

S: "Why is He doing like that? Can we call Him cruel, then?"

Papa: "We cannot say these devotees are not sincere in their Sadhana. If they are not sincere, they may not be able to continue for such a long time; they would try their Sadhana for a couple of hours and then give it up. That is not the case. They struggle for years and die without attaining anything."

S: "Can we say they die without attaining anything?"

Papa: "They may succeed in their next life. But that is not what is wanted. Why does He not come to them in this life itself?"

S: "What prevents Him from coming?"

Papa: "Whatever prevents Him is also caused by Him, is it not? Why 'caused by Him,' it is He Himself."

S: "Then the seeker is also He. The preventer is also He. The sought is also He."

Papa: "That is the thing. When everything is He, who is seeking and who is sought? He Himself is weeping and wailing to attain Himself, and also putting some obstructions on His own way. He laughs at us and says: 'On whom am I to shower mercy when I am everything? The whole thing is my own game. Everything is "I". How foolish are you to think that I am mercilessly keeping the aspirant waiting and so forth?' But Ramdas tells Him, 'You alone are accusing you that you are not merciful to some of the aspirants." (Papa laughed).

S: "I thought the game was complete before Papa said the last sentence. Papa took a step further to complete His game so nicely."

Papa: "That is the only solution for all problems."

CHAPTER VI

STARTING ON TOUR : A TOUCHING SIGHT

Place: Anandashram.

Tuesday, 27th October, 1953.

A parcel was received yesterday containing a reel of cinema film taken on the occasion of the opening of Ramdas Ashram at Bhavnagar. The opening was performed by Papa. The film was sent by Anantrai Kamdar, son of Gunvantrai Kamdar.

8-30 p.m. Papa got busy with the projector and started showing the films to a number of Ashramites and visitors gathered in the Bhajan hall, Papa himself operating. The show was all right though the projector gave a bit of trouble at the end, which Papa set right soon. After the whole show was over and after rewinding the films, Papa said: "This old horse (looking at the projector) has run all right." Patting with his hand on the projector, he said, "Thank you, thank you."

In a few minutes Papa was on his bed, and S. was massaging his back.

Papa: "It is not good our going away on tours leaving all the Ashramites behind."

S: "What else to do?"

Papa: "Nothing. Ram's will be done! Now we have a very peaceful time in the Ashram. But while on tour, we shall have so many programmes that we will be busy and knocking about the whole day from one engagement to another."

S: "What a contrast between this peaceful life here and the life on tour so full of activity!"

Papa: "There is a lot of fun and joy there also."

S: "So it is all right. We can spend six months here and six months on tour."

Papa: "Ramdas is wanted everywhere. He has become a slightly big fellow, hasn't he? He can see it from the film we saw now."

S: "Papa knew that only after seeing the film?"

Papa: "Ramdas could see it clearly in the film."

S: "During Sadhana days, or even earlier, had Papa any inkling of such a life?"

Papa: "No, never. During Sadhana days or earlier he never thought of such a life. He did not wish or desire for anything."

S: "Papa must have had some wish as to how his life should be moulded."

✓ Papa: "He wished to attain the supreme peace within and the vision of God everywhere."

S: "Did he not think of the external at all?"

✓ Papa: "Yes, he wanted to have His vision everywhere." . . . . . .

S: "I mean Papa's external life."

Papa: "No, no thought of that. He never believed in guiding or teaching people. Even now he does not believe in it. He is not a lecturer and he cannot pose to be one. Is he posing or pretending to be a lecturer? Perhaps he might be doing."

S: "Even if there is pretension, who is actually doing it?"

Papa: "Ram does it. He is the best pretender. Ramdas does not think that he can guide people by lecturing before them. Sometimes he is forced to talk. But he is sure that if he cuts a joke and they are made to laugh, they will be more benefited than by hearing his lecture for an hour.

"For talking, Ramdas' language is not good. He can tell some stories and make others laugh. Of course, if he had better language the stories would also have been more interesting."

S: "It is a wonder how Papa gets at these stories to narrate at the proper context."

Papa: "It is not because of Ramdas' cleverness that he is able to tell the stories. Once somebody asked Ramakrishna how he could talk for hours together narrating stories after stories. It seems he replied that when paddy is being measured, there is one who is actually measuring, one behind him ready to fill the measure, and still another behind him pushing the paddy from the big heap. So he was only like the one who was actually measuring, his supply being reimbursed without break by the Mother behind. So also Ramdas is getting the supplies from the Mother within. She pushes them to Ramdas one story after another at the right time."

S: "How did Papa learn all these stories; by reading or hearing?"

Papa: "Both."

Friday, 30th October, 1953.

Papa's room. After his shave, Papa was having oil massage. Mataji entered the room.

Papa: "Have you got the clothes ready for Ramdas' bath?"

Mataji: "I am getting them ready. Will you have thin shirt or thick shirt?"

Papa: "Who knows?"

Mataji: "What is this answer? In which college did you learn to answer like this?"

Papa *(laughing)*: "What else can Ramdas say? If he says he wants thick shirt and afterwards it is warm, he will have to change it. If he puts on thin shirt and if it is cool, he will have to change it. Then how can he say what he exactly wants? Ramdas has learnt from experience that he should not commit himself by saying that he wants this or that. The safest thing he has found is to leave it to you."

Mataji: "Will you then have a thin shirt?"

Papa: "Yes, if you think so."

Both laughed and Mataji went to arrange for the bath.

9-30 p.m. Papa is to start on tour tomorrow, with Mataji and S., by the Mail leaving at 10-30 a.m. Mataji is busy arranging things to be kept in the Ashram, and packing the Samans to be taken for the tour. They are all spread out in the room in the main Ashram.

A number of children are running about in the Bhajan hall making a lot of noise and some of the Ashramites are sitting and talking to Papa.

Mataji: "Papa, unless you go to bed I cannot do any packing work."

Papa: "You may carry on."

Mataji: "Those sitting here and the children playing about will go away only when you go to bed."

Papa: "All right. Then Ramdas is going to bed. You may switch off the lights of the Ashram hall."

Papa went to his room and all left one by one to their rooms. Mataji, S. and a couple of others sat inside the room and started packing.

In about half an hour, Papa was suddenly seen standing at the doorway to the room, looking at the packing that was going on.

Mataji: "Why, Papa did not get sleep yet?"

Papa: "Just came to see how you are getting on with packing. Why are you taking so many things? Remember, if you take too many things we will have to pay a huge amount towards air freight. Reduce the Samans as much as possible."

Mataji: "Papa, I am not taking anything unnecessary. These vessels, you may say, are not required, but in Sholapur they will be necessary, and it will be difficult to manage without them. Anyhow, I shall leave two of these behind."

Papa then went to bed. In a few minutes Motiben came saying that Papa wanted a peppermint.

S: "We have already packed the lozenges-tin inside the hold-all. Should we open it now?"

Mataji *(to S.)*: "You go and ask Papa if you should open the hold-all and take out that tin."

S. *(in Papa's room)*: "Papa, I am sorry I packed the lozenges-tin in the hold-all."

Papa: "Doesn't matter. Motiben is bringing something else."

Motiben came and gave a piece of sugarcandy, and Papa went to bed again.

S. *(to Mataji)*: "Motiben gave a piece of sugercandy to Papa."

Mataji: "It has become so common. Whenever we have packed something, Papa asks for it. He has not been taking lozenges for the last so many days. So we thought he would not need it. See, Papa asked for it now."

Saturday, 31st October, 1953.

The tour begins. Papa has been busy, right from morning, attending to things regarding the tour. The party is to leave the Ashram only at 9-30 a.m. But Papa is ready at 8-30 a.m. with a small bag containing his pen, purse, a small knife, a diary and some other small articles.

S: "Papa is ready to start?"

Papa: "Yes, Ramdas is ready with his bag. That is all he carries!" He then walked towards the Asan.

Papa: "Ramdas' legs are tired. He must sit down."

S: "Papa has been on his legs right from morning."

Papa *(to the large number of devotees present in the hall)*: "In the early days of his wanderings he used to go about only with two pieces of cloth and a small bag like this, even smaller than this. Now see, what all paraphernalia follow him!" Then Papa was silent for a few minutes. He appeared to be thinking of something. "Ah", he said.

S: "What is that, Papa?"

Papa *(smiling)*: "Ramdas feels a bit agitated. Going on tour leaving these people behind moves his heart. Till lately this sort of agitation was not there. Now he feels it, which he ought not to."

S: "Is it that he ought not to feel so?"

Papa: "Some years back he was as hard as a rock, and he was proud of it. Now the rock has become so soft that it melts."

Now Mataji was passing alongside of Papa, while she was going to the room.

Papa *(to Mataji)*: "Now Ramdas feels agitated while leaving these people behind and going away. He was not like that before, and was proud to be as hard as a rock."

Mataji: "That is on account of the breeze that is flowing to you from us. Because of our company you are becoming soft and melting as we are."

At 9 a.m. Papa and others who were to leave went for meals. By the time Papa returned, the Bhajan hall was full of people, mostly with tears in their eyes. Before Papa left the dining hall, Balamma, who has been in the Ashram for over sixteen years and who will be in charge of the kitchen and sundry affairs in the absence of Mataji, stood in front of him with folded hands, tears streaming down her cheeks. A few words came out of her choked throat in the shape of an appeal to Papa: "Papa, do not forget us, do not forget us."

Papa assured her that he wouldn't.

Ramkishore was agitated more than anybody else. He was not showing his feelings, but one could see he was suppressing them. He was sticking to Papa, sitting by his side or walking with him. He went on asking a number of questions, not minding whether others were talking to Papa or not, and Papa had to reply to them. If Papa was speaking to anyone else ignoring his question he would persistently repeat his question till Papa turned to him and gave the answer.

Papa had asked him not to weep and make a show while the party was leaving. So he wanted to control himself. But sometimes he found it difficult to do so. While taking his coffee in Papa's room this morning, he behaved like a rude boy, throwing the plates here and there, and tears came out of his eyes. When Mataji asked him not to weep, he replied that his mother (Motiben) who was sitting in front of him started weeping first, so he also wept. He asked his mother not to weep lest he should also follow suit.

When the time for departure came, there was a stir and commotion. Those who were so far controlling themselves now burst out. Of course, this time it was nothing compared to the scene they created while Papa and Mataji were leaving for tour in 1949.

Papa had come out and was waiting near the cement seats. The post had just arrived and he was opening the letters in great hurry. This post ought to have come yesterday evening, but as the mail was late it could not come in time. So a messenger was sent specially this morning to bring it.

When Papa opened one letter from Ratilal M. Dave, Katrasgarh, he found it contained two cheques, but one cheque was torn to two pieces apparently by himself while opening the cover in a hurry.

Papa *(to S)*: "Oh, Ramdas tore this cheque in his hurry, while opening the cover. Will the bank cash it?"

S: "They may cash it, if the two pieces are pasted together."

Papa: "Otherwise you will have to write to Ratilal. He will, of course, send another cheque. But there will be delay, especially when money is wanted here very badly."

Balaji *(who is to be in charge of the Ashram)*: "I shall send it to the bank properly pasted and they may cash it without difficulty."

Papa handed over the whole correspondence to Balaji with the necessary instructions.

The party got into the taxi. A few Ashramites also followed. Many had gone to the Railway Station in advance on foot. The party left. A few friends and devotees were waiting at the Railway Station. The Station Master was kind enough to provide two chairs. Papa sat on one, but Mataji kept standing. Ramkishore sat on the other chair. In a few minutes the train arrived and the party (Papa, Mataji, and S.) got into the II class compartment, already reserved, through to Bangalore. A very anxious group was waiting outside on the platform, all very unhappy over the impending separation. There was none without tears in his or her eyes. With their heavy hearts they looked intently at Papa and Mataji. The train whistled off. Subbaram proposed Jaikar to Papa and Mataji and the whole group shouted Jaikar to both.

Now Papa could see them only from a distance, waving handkerchiefs. Papa was waving in return.

Before the train gained speed, three officers of the Railway jumped into the compartment. They introduced themselves — one as the Guard and the other two as T.T.R.'s (travelling ticket-checking Inspectors).

T.T.R: "Swamiji, we jumped in, wishing to spend at least a few minutes in the holy atmosphere of your presence. We cannot get it always, so we snatched this opportunity to have a few minutes with you."

Papa: "That is very good. Come on. Sit here. Don't be standing." They sat opposite to Papa and Mother.

T.T.R: "Swamiji, I read your article in the 'Sunday Times.' Even in the latest issue there is an advertisement of your books. I was reading that and here I am with you. Swamiji, it reminds me how you were travelling years ago without ticket and how, when some T.T.R. asked you to get down, you took it to be Ram's will that you should get down there. Now we will not ask you to get down. Our hearts have changed now."

S: "But he does not travel without a ticket nowadays."

T.T.R: "Even if he goes without ticket, we will not ask him to get down. Swamiji, are Yogasanas necessary for spiritual advancement?"

Papa: "Yogasanas do help. They will not take one to the ultimate goal, but will enable one to keep one's body fit for regular Sadhana."

T.T.R: "For Kundalini Yoga, Asanas are necessary."

Papa: "Of course, for Yoga practices one must keep the body fit. One must be able to sit steady, and practice of Asanas is necessary."

Guard: "For meditation, the best is Sukhasan. Is it not Swamiji?"

Papa: "Of course, Sukhasan is good and simple."

The train now reached Nileshwar Station and they took leave of Papa for attending to their work.

Papa, Mataji and S. were the only occupants in the compartment. At Cannanore, Joshiji and his friends were on the platform. Getting inside the compartment they garlanded Papa and Mother. Joshiji had brought his daughter also with him. He told Papa that her marriage was fixed to take place at Rajkot on the 9th of December, and as Papa would be at Bhavnagar at that time, Papa would kindly visit Rajkot and bless the couple. After some persuasion, Papa agreed. Then Papa asked Mataji if he should agree to go to Rajkot for the marriage. He also mentioned that there is air service and it would take only half an hour to reach there from Bhavnagar.

Mataji: "As you decide."

So Joshiji was happy.

At Calicut, R. Keshav Rao, S. N. Nath, R. Viswanathan and a number of other devotees came for Papa's Darshan with a lot of eatables, milk, coffee and tea. They were extremely happy that they could have Papa's Darshan now, as Papa was travelling by train instead of by plane direct to Bangalore as was previously planned.

The change was due to uncertain weather conditions.

At Shoranur, a large number of devotees from Trichur had come — V. K. Rama Menon, Devarajan, Swami Krishnananda, Kalakanṭa Menon, P. V. Subramania Iyer and others.

Vishalakshi, the Ashram girl who was married in May last to P. V. Subramania Iyer's son, was very anxious to meet Papa. She had also come with the party. She was overjoyed to meet Papa and Mother. After garlanding and prostrating before them, she sat by Mataji's side and was laughing like a child. Other devotees had crowded in the compartment, prostrating one by one to Papa and giving the various presents and eatables they had brought.

Mataji: "Vishalakshi has improved in her health. She gets love from you all. When she was in the Ashram she was getting only scoldings and abuses from me." (Vishalakshi started sobbing).

Devarajan's wife was standing in front of Papa. Devarajan, who was standing on the right of Papa, knelt down and, with folded hands and eyes full of tears, prayed: "Papa, I am prostrating before this mother (his wife). Give me strength to observe perfect Brahmacharya." He then prostrated before her and got up.

The train whistled. All the devotees alighted except P. V. Subramania Iyer, Devarajan, Vishalakshi and her husband.

Papa *(to Vishalakṣhi)*: "It is time to get down."

Vishalakshi: "No, Papa, I am not getting down."

Papa: "Ah, what?"

S: "They are coming up to the next station, Papa."

They got down at the next station. Vishalakshi was weeping. Mataji and Papa encouraged her to go cheerfully.

Olavakode and Podanur also were busy stations with a large number of devotees. At both these stations the devotees had brought plenty of food offerings to Papa. Papa had his evening meal after the train left Podanur. All the packets were opened for him to see, and he took a pinch from each and also a cup of milk. Then Mataji and S. started their meal. A number of oranges were lying on the seat. Papa took one, peeled it, and started eating without his teeth. S. brought his dentures washed. Papa put them on and ate another orange, and then another.

Mataji: "Papa, we could have given you the oranges washed and properly peeled. You are taking them without being washed."

Papa laughed like a child, his feet stamping the floor one after the other. Mataji is very particular to see that fruits are well washed and cleaned before they are given to Papa. Now she was not happy to see Papa eating them unwashed. Papa did not mind it.

At Erode, a fat Sindhi gentleman peeped into the compartment from the platform. Seeing Papa, he enquired of S. if this was Swami Ramdas Maharaj from

Mangalore. When he got the reply in the affirmative, he disappeared from there and came back, after five minutes, accompanied by another friend of his with some plantains.

He introduced himself to Papa as having heard of him through his wife who attended Papa's Satsang at Premkuti in Bombay. She had, it seems, written to him that he should not fail to meet Papa. So when he heard that Papa was travelling by this train he came to have his Darshan.

Papa talked with the Sindhi friend for a few minutes and they took leave of Papa. Just after they left, Papa said, "Ramdas ought to have given some plantains to them." He then went near the door and peeped out to see if they could be called. They were not to be seen. Again he said: "Ramdas ought to have given them this. Now they have gone."

Mysteriously, after two or three minutes, the Sindhi friend entered the compartment, asking where Papa will be staying in Bombay. Papa was so happy to see him again.

Papa: "Oh, you have come. Ramdas was very sorry he did not give you some fruits before you left. He tried to call you back, but by that time you had gone. How gracious of you! You yourself came back to receive the fruits!!"

Papa then gave him a few plantains as Prasad, and he left after getting the necessary information.

Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram

GLOSSARY

Advaitin	Advocate of the school of philosophy declaring the oneness of God, soul and universe.
Agarbattis	Incense sticks which are burnt especially during worship.
Ahimsa	Non-violence.
Asan	Seat.
Asanas	(see Yogasanas).
Ashram	Abode of a saint.
Ashramite(s)	Inmate of an Ashram.
Aswattha	The peepal tree.
Avadhuta(s)	A holy person of great renunciation.
Bhagavad Gita	The well-known Hindu scripture, dealing with Lord Krishna's discourse with Arjuna in the battlefield of Kurukshetra.
Bhagavan	An epithet of the Godhead; used also in addressing some distinguished saints and sages.
Bhagavatar	One who is versed in singing the glories of God.
Bhajan	Remembering God by singing hymns or chanting His names.
Bhakta	Devotee.
Bhakti	Devotion.
Bhikshu	One who lives on alms.
Brahmacharya	A spiritual discipline involving strict continence.

Darshan	Holy vision or visit.
Dassera	A Hindu festival.
Dosai	A kind of unleavened cake made of rice.
Draupadi	The wife of the five Pandava brothers.
Durvasa	A sage with a very angry disposition.
Dvaitin	Advocate of the philosophy of Dualism.
Ganesh	The god with the elephant's head; the god of success, the son of Shiva.
Ganja	Indian hemp.
Goshala	Cowshed.
Guru (dev)	Spiritual preceptor.
Hanuman Mandir	Temple in which is installed the idol of Hanuman, the great monkey devotee of Rama mentioned in the *Ramayana*.
Hatha Yoga	A school of Yoga that aims chiefly at physical health and well-being.
Himsa	Violence.
Iddali	Steam-baked cake made of rice and black-gram.
Jaikar	The call of 'Jai' as a mark of applause.
Japa	Repetition of God's name or Mantra.
Jivanmukta	A liberated soul.
Jnana Yoga	The path of knowledge consisting of discrimination, renunciation and other disciplines.
Khir	A sweet pudding.
Krishna	One of the ideal deities of the Vaishnavas (devotees of Vishnu).
Krishnarpanam	The act of dedication of any meritorious deed to Lord Krishna.

Kundalini Yoga	The process of union with God by raising the spiritual energy lying dormant at the foot of the spine until it reaches the Sahasrara centre at the top of the head.
Mahalaya Amavasya	An auspicious New Moon day in the Hindu almanac.
Maharshi	A great Rishi or Seer of Truth.
Mahatma	A high-souled person.
Mantra(s)	A mystic word or words.
Moha	Attachment.
Muni	A holy man given to solitude and contemplation.
Nama Likhita Japa Yajna	The worship of God by writing His name repeatedly.
Nirguna Swarup	Aspect of God without attributes.
Pooja	Worship.
Poojari(s)	Worshipper.
Prasad	Food offered to God or saints.
Raja Yoga	The Yoga described in Patanjali's treatise on Raja Yoga.
Ram	An epithet for God; one of the ten principal Avatars of Lord Vishnu; A respectful way of referring to any person.
Ramnam	God's name.
Rishi(s)	Sage; Seer of Truth.
Sadhaka(s)	Spiritual aspirant.
Sadhana	Spiritual practice.
Sadhu	A holy person.
Saguna Swarup	Aspect of God with attributes.
Samans	Articles or things.

Samata	Equality.
Saree(s)	An Indian woman's wearing cloth.
Satsang	Association with pure souls.
Sattwic	Mild or non-irritant.
Siddhi(s)	The eight occult powers which the Yogi acquires through the practice of Yoga; perfection in spiritual life.
Sukhasan	One of the Yogic postures.
Tamboola	A preparation of betal leaf, etc., generally chewed after meals.
Tulsi	A plant sacred to Vishnu (a deity of the Hindu Trinity).
Tulsipooja	Worship of the Tulsi plant.
Udyog Shala	Industrial school.
Upanayana	Sacred thread ceremony initiating into Brahmacharya.
Vairagya	Dispassion.
Vaishnavite	A member of the well-known dualistic Vaishnava sect.
Yajna	Sacrifice.
Yoga(s)	The method by which union with God is attained; union of the soul with the Over-soul.
Yogasana(s)	Yogic posture.